DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 180 268 HE 010 519

TITLE	Papers in Women's Studies. Special Issue.
INSTITUTION	Michigan Univ., Ann Arbor.
PUB DATE	May 78
NOTE	110p.; Includes some of the papers presented at the University of Michigan Seminar on Research and Teaching About Women (Ann Arbor, MI, Winter and Spring 1977)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Clothing Design; *Family (Sociological Unit); Family Status; Females; *Feminism; Higher Education; Historical Reviews; Illegitimate Births; *Needle Trades; *Sex Role; *Socioeconomic Status; State of the Art Reviews; *Womens Studies
IDENTIFIERS	*University of Michigan

ABSTRACT

Five seminar papers on women's studies and a paper providing an overview of the papers and the Michigan Seminar on Research and Teaching about Women are presented. Catharine R. Stimpson considers the field of women's studies as an area of research and teaching and discusses the current diversity of topic, theory, and method. She notes national and international trends, which are not always consonant with each other. Ellen Morgan discusses her own experience in the women's movement and in teaching women's studies. She notes that one of the real problems has been living up to the challenge set by activists, fulfilling multiple obligations to students and feminism. Kathryn Kish Sklar explores the links between class and gender in a historical sequence of events that took place in eighteenth-century Northampton, Massachusetts. She examines the relationship between civil and cultural (religious) norms, and the interaction of political and lineage rivalries and how these things affected the outcome for the woman involved in a case of fornication which resulted in illegitimate birth. Rachel Maines examines needlework in the United States as a female popular art and describes the development and elaboration of style and technique and the broad dissemination of design books and instructions. Economic factors that hindered decorative needlework are also considered. Rayna Rapp examines first the meaning of family and household and proceeds to examine the normative situation of family and household, and of the genders within them, in working class, middle class, upper class, and among the very poor in contemporary America. The introductory paper was written by Louise A. Tilly and Mary Edwards. (SW)

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SPECIAL ISSUE

PAPERS IN WOMEN'S STUDIES

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The University of Michigan

PAPERS in WOMEN'S STUDIES

SPECIAL ISSUE

May, 1978

Published by students and faculty at

the Women's Studies Program, Ann Arbor.

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The Front Cover

PRINT SHOP - An original woodcut by Nancy R. Davison
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The woodcut was drawn and cut from life while the artist was a student of Leonard Baskin at Smith College. It shows a friend setting type for a book amid the type cases, presses and other clutter in the basement of the now demolished Hillyer Art Gallery at Smith. The print measures 15" x 20" and is available in black and white from the artist c/o The University of Michigan Papers in Women's Studies.

The Back Cover

Photograph by Laurie Levinger, a free-lance photographer living in Ann Arbor.

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This publication gratefully acknowledges the support of the Women's Studies Program, College of Literature, Science and the Arts of the University of Michigan.

EDITORIAL STATEMENT

This special issue of *The University of Michigan Papers in Women's Studies* presents some of the papers read to the University of Michigan Seminar on Research and Teaching about Women, sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities in winter and spring, 1977. This seminar brought together faculty and graduate students from the University of Michigan, Eastern Michigan University, Western Michigan University, Central Michigan University, Schoolcraft College and Washtenaw Community College to discuss these and other papers. It was part of a larger project directed by Professor Louise A. Tilly and Dr. Mary Edwards of the University of Michigan which is described in the introduction to the issue, "Women's Studies in Process: Overviews and Case Studies in Teaching and Research on Women." Ann Munster of *The University of Michigan Papers in Women's Studies* worked with the project staff to produce this issue.

Women's Studies in Process: Overviews and Case Studies in Teaching and Research on Women

Louise A. Tilly
Mary Edwards

The year 1977 marked two exciting milestones for the academic field of women's studies, on the one hand, and for the position of women in the United States, on the other. In January, 1977 a National Women's Studies Association was founded, and in several days of interchange and collaboration delegates drafted a constitution which committed the group to action both in the academy and in the community. In November, 1977 elected delegates from all over the nation met in Houston at a National Women's Conference. Again there was a fruitful exchange of ideas and opinions, again a consensual plan of action was hammered out.

The University of Michigan Seminar on Research and Teaching about Women had its origins in the same intellectual milieu and state of consciousness as the two national meetings. It grew out of the experience of teaching women's studies at Michigan and other nearby institutions, out of the vigorous interdisciplinary research and teaching that was, and is, going on at these universities. Its goals were to promote teaching and scholarship about women, to build networks of cooperation and sharing among participating institutions and individuals, and to produce interdisciplinary "core courses" to be taught at these institutions and distributed widely to others. The project as a whole was made possible by a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities and support from the University of Michigan College of Literature, Science and the Arts.

The project developed in several stages. First, a group of Women's Studies scholars and teachers from colleges, community colleges, and universities in southern Michigan met together for a weekly seminar. The purpose of the seminar was to examine the new scholarship on women in the various disciplines in order to determine how it could best be integrated into the Women's Studies classroom. In addition to hearing and discussing draft versions of the essays contained in this issue, the Seminar considered pedagogical and curricular questions which confront Women's Studies teachers.

In the second phase of the project the Seminar commissioned task forces of its members to develop courses in four broadly defined interdisciplinary subject areas

where there seemed to be greatest interest and need; women and identity, women from a cross-cultural perspective, women and the arts, and women and the American experience. Each task force was responsible for designing a course which would introduce both the complex subject matter and the methodologies of the relevant disciplines. In addition to assembling and annotating bibliographic materials, the task forces outlined background lectures teachers could use, wrote summaries and critiques of the central debates in each area, and developed lists of questions that could be posed in class discussion or shaped into paper topics or examination questions. Each task force deliberately gathered more material than could reasonably be covered in a semester so that teachers would be able to select and adapt the materials to suit their needs. In their final form the "courses" became packages of curricular materials: Women and Identity (120 pp.), Women's Art and Culture (77 pp.), A Cross Cultural Study of Women (132 pp.), and New Woman, New World: The American Experience (114 pp.).

In the final phase of the project each course was piloted at one or more of the institutions participating in the project. They were also made available at nominal cost to teachers of Women's Studies throughout the United States.

The essays in this special issue of The University of Michigan Papers in Women's Studies are some of the papers presented to the seminar. Two of them, those by Catherine Stimpson and Ellen Morgan, are overviews which examine the field of women's studies as an area of research, teaching, and potential action for social change. The other three papers are research reports, examples of fruitful interdisciplinary scholarship.

Stimpson's essay addresses both research and teaching, and it generally stays within the bounds of the University in its focus. Stimpson notes, in fact, that some academics might be uneasy about the explicit link between women's studies and vast social change made in the "Preamble" of the National Women's Studies Association draft constitution. She discusses the current diversity of topic, theory and method - a strength, she believes, of contemporary scholarly women's research. She notes national and international trends, not always consonant with each other. The continuing marginality of women's studies within the academy is an object of concern. Over all, however, Stimpson emerges optimistic. She is optimistic because of the energy and commitment still bubbling over among women's studies scholars, and because of their willingness to accept, and indeed

welcome, diversity. She notes, in concluding, new fruitful and sophisticated theorizing which bodes well for women's studies as an academic "interdiscipline."

Ellen Morgan's essay combines autobiographical reflections with an agenda for teaching women's studies in the future. She thoughtfully discusses her own experience in the women's movement and in teaching women's studies. Like others, she notes that one of the real problems has been living up to the challenge set by movement activists, fulfilling multiple obligations to students and feminism. Retrospectively, she believes that more attention to social scientific analysis and history of social change would have been useful to those working in the movement and teaching women's studies. Morgan concludes that, "in addition to raising consciousness or providing facts about women, we need to raise consciousness and provide facts about working toward social change."

The three empirical studies which follow Stimpson's and Morgan's overviews illustrate the range and depth of contemporary women's studies research and the fruitfulness of interdisciplinary approaches. All three look at historical processes of change; all three are methodologically located in the social sciences; all three are concerned with the United States. Let us look at them chronologically by the time period they discuss.

Kathryn Kish Sklar explores the links between class and gender in a historical sequence of events which took place in eighteenth-century Northampton, Massachusetts. The study presented here is part of a larger comparative study. Sklar examines the relationship between civil and cultural (religious) norms, and the interaction of political and lineage rivalries and how these things affected the outcome for the woman involved in a case of fornication which resulted in illegitimate birth. She shows that the economic interest of Northampton's wealthy and powerful elite was paralleled by a cultural hegemony, which overrode the religious and community oriented arguments put forward by Jonathan Edwards, the charismatic and influential minister of Northampton's First Church.

Martha Root, who bore the illegitimate child of Elisha Hawley, was awarded child support by a civil court. The First Church congregation voted to require that young Hawley marry her. Hawley's brother, Joseph, acting in behalf of his wealthy family, appealed the local church's decision to a regional council of ministers, and there Hawley was upheld. Sklar notes the political and lineage rivalry of Edwards and Hawley as part of the context

for the case. She ties the event also to the Great Awakening, of which Edwards was a prime theorist and speaker, but in the course of which he aroused opposition among his parishioners, including the anti-clerical Joseph Hawley. Interestingly, Sklar shows that the eighteenth-century Great Awakening, although it increased the role of the laity in religious practice, did not affect women's participation as did the nineteenth-century Second Great Awakening. This latter revival has been seen as setting the stage for increased participation of women in public life within and beyond the church and as a germinal event in the politicization of women in the suffrage movement. Thus Sklar's essay, although in itself focused on a historical and ethnographic exploration of the layers of interpersonal links and relationships in one town in one series of events, takes us back to larger issues of how economic and sexual inequalities interact in different political and cultural contexts.

Rachel Maines has done an intriguing piece of social history, drawing on her encyclopedic knowledge of needlework history and a quantitative analysis of the economic position of the notions industry and its outlets in four New England towns. She is concerned with needlework as a female popular art, not as the hobby of leisured women, or the output of professional lace-makers and embroiderers. Popular needlework expanded with the growth of the leisure and prosperity of the working class in the northeast, as well as the growth of the middle class. Maines describes the development and elaboration of style and technique and the broad dissemination of design books and instructions. Tastes for embroidered decoration flourished in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and the thread companies prospered as a consequence. Changing tastes and the decline of the textile and novelty goods industry reversed the trend, and the Depression turned people to money-saving rather than decorative needlework.

Like Sklar, Maines also brings to bear several disciplines and theories, and her range of sources runs from needlework instructions to business reports and city directories. We owe Maines a debt for her firm insistence that women's art forms be examined in a serious, systematic, and scholarly way, and her demonstration of the value of such an examination.

Rayna Rapp's paper brings us to contemporary America and it uses the tools and theories of history, sociology and anthropology. She examines first the meaning of

family and household. For her, family is the kin unit which recruits people into households and keeps them there. Rapp's analytic units are not localities, as they are for Sklar and Maines, but classes, for the characteristics of households and families vary by class. Class is defined here as a process of changing relationships of groups to the means of production. Rapp notes too that the genders stand in differing material relations vis-à-vis class. She then proceeds to examine the normative situation of family and household, and of the genders within them, in working class, middle class, upper class and among the very poor in contemporary America. Her sources are ethnographic field work and survey reports done by others. Her insights are especially persuasive in the case of the working class and the very poor. She points up the very real contradictions which limited resources impose on normative aspirations and behavior in these groups.

Rapp's paper is the one in our collection which most explicitly seeks to build theory. She starts from feminist and class analyses and uses ethnographic study of household and family to establish clearer definitions and categories. Then she builds a synthetic analysis which fruitfully combines class and feminist insights. She concludes, "women have structurally taken up the position of representing the contradictions between autonomy and dependence, between love and money, in the relations of families to capitalism," and she explores several directions for change.

All three studies insist on the historical and structural context of the women and of the female activities they examine. All three take their questions, methods, and strategies from several disciplines. All three richly confirm Catherine Stimpson's conclusion,

> we believe that we are doing something fresh, and in the company of others. We have escaped both ennui and isolation, which, we are told, haunt the modern intellectual and scholar. This happy flight, as we fight against our marginality, is a source of our galvanizing strength.

Finally, all three succeed as contributions to their own fields and to women's studies.

Women's Studies: An Overview

Catharine R. Stimpson

If one phrase were to summarize the general condition of women's studies today, it would be "galvanizing marginality." "Galvanizing" is a cheerful word, "marginality" much less so.[1] Schools, colleges, universities, and research centers are not yet clamoring to incorporate the new scholarship about women into their conceptual schemes or women's studies into their educational habits. They are more receptive than they once were, but this is only like saying, in early spring, that winter is over. The best practioners of the new scholarship about women try to fuse their ideas and methods with the best from other fields. A Juliet Mitchell, for example, is profoundly aware of psychoanalysis. However, most people in other fields fail to extend intellectual reciprocity, let alone a generous curiosity. A widely-reviewed new book about contemporary American culture, to take a counterexample, failed even to list Kate Millett in its index.[2]

Next, despite the efforts of some exceptional foundations, outside funding for all women's projects, including educational ones, is comparatively trivial. In 1975, it totalled but $1,058,222. Next, the hiring and promotion of women is still, at best problematic.[3] Not only is this unfair and harmful in itself, but some recent evidence suggests that the very presence of women in a department dramatically helps in the struggle to get reasonable material about women into a classroom.[4] Finally, attitudes towards women -- as a group, as faculty members, as students, as subjects for study, as representatives of a rich, serious point-of-view -- remain surly, indifferent, or quaintly patronizing. An eminent philosopher prattles on about his adventures in ethnomethodology:

> ...when I had the unforgettable pleasure of attending a Conference on Ethnomethodology in Edinburgh, it was noticeable and I think significant, that the quality and quantity of ethno-chicks surpassed by far those of chicks of any other movement which I have ever observed--even Far Out Left Chicks, not to mention ordinary anthropo-chicks, socio-chicks or (dreadful thought) philosophy chicks.[5]

Obviously, such marginality leaves us in exposed, dangerous, and vulnerable positions. Non-tenured faculty members whose jobs are terminated are among those who suffer the most. In addition, we lack a clear consensus about what we might and should do if we were to be fully integrated into the institutions that now place us on their fringe, sometimes as a benefit, more often not. Some of the questions that now divide us have to do with current academic methods. Are they too rigid, too impersonal, too specialized, too arcane and inaccessible except to a few? Other questions have to do with the demands of current academic life. Is successful "professionalism" psychologically destructive, particularly to the capacity for intimacy and for altruism?[6]

Still other questions have to do with the nature of the questions that women's studies should ask. Is it enough to investigate women and sex roles? Is it enough to re-read George Eliot? Or, should we explore those areas that the women's movement has brought out of neglect and into prominence? In political science, this might mean women's access to public power or the place of hierarchies, recognized or unrecognized, in feminist groups. In economics, this might mean occupational segregation or the income of female-headed families. In literature, this might mean the re-discovery of forgotten women writers and the revision of the canon. In psychology, this might mean women's achievement motivation or the emotional patterns of menstrual cycles. In any field, it might mean sexuality.

Or, a third choice, should our primary concern be those questions that might, if answered, obviously benefit the lives of women. Here the possibility of reconciling conflicts between motherhood and work outside the home, the development of safer birth control, and the reform of the welfare system are obvious research priorities. This choice, because it promises to reduce the alienation of intellectual life from day-to-day life, is very appealing. However, if carried out too crudely, it could help to perpetuate a stratification of academic disciplines in which the social sciences lord it over the humanities in the allocation of resources and prestige.

The question of what questions to ask has, as a parallel, the decision about what materials to present in a women's studies classroom itself. Since 1969, when women's studies began as a national movement, we have been concerned about the actual and potential

links between curriculum and our students' existential experience. We have construed the classroom as a place in which crippling illusions could be stripped away and in which behavior could be transformed. In the process, we have worried about the effect of teaching what has so often been a record of male domination and female subordination; of male expansiveness and female constriction. More and more syllabi attempt to show the totality of women's lives: the farcical as well as the tragic; the sterile as well as the fertile; the depressing as well as the enhancing. However, some syllabi still reflect the wish, no less wrong-headed for being well-meant, only to uplift and to inspire.

Recently, in California, I went to a workshop about teaching the Lesbian novel. In both form and content, it seemed innovative. Not only was it presenting previously shunned material, it was being taught off-campus, in a women's center, by a non-academic. However, the reading list reflected a decision to discuss only books with happy endings, i.e., where two women were going to live together forever after without too much trouble. If Patience and Sarah was an acceptable text, Nightwood was not; at the very least it was a violation of the lesbian literary tradition.

Even more formidable, and potentially more divisive, areas of problematic inquiry have to do with the relationship of women's studies to large political and moral commitments. At its founding conference, in January, 1977, the National Women's Studies Association offered a comprehensive vision of such connections. The "Preamble" to the draft constitution declares:

> We, the delegates to the first convention of the National Women's Studies Association, have met to found an organization designed to further the social, political, and professional development of women's studies throughout the country, at every educational level and in every educational setting.
>
> Women's studies owes its existence to the movement for the liberation of women; the women's liberation movement exists because women are oppressed. Women's studies, diverse as its components are, has at its best shared a vision of a world free not only from sexism but also from racism, class-bias, ageism, heterosexual bias -- all the ideologies and institutions that have consciously oppressed and exploited some for the advantage of others. The development

> of women's studies in the past decade -- the remarkable proliferation of programs that necessitated this association -- is a history of creative struggle to evolve knowledge, theory, pedagogy, and organizational models appropriate to that vision.
>
> Women's studies is the educational strategy of a breakthrough in consciousness and knowledge. The uniqueness of women's studies has been its refusal to accept sterile divisions between academy and community, between the growth of the mind and the health of the body, between intellect and passion, between the individual and society.
>
> Women's studies, then, is equipping women not only to enter society as whole and productive human beings, but to transform it. This constitution reaffirms that commitment.[7]

Whether everyone who considers her/himself a part of women's studies would wholly accept this statement is unclear. This is not to say that s/he is sexist, or racist, or homophobic, but rather that s/he might find the tone wrong or the link between women's studies and vast social change too explicit.

Despite the marginality, the galvanizing quality of women's studies -- the energy and creativity -- is vitally apparent to those of us who believe in it. We need no longer call for a feminist sociology, or for a feminist criticism, or for a women's history. Their beginnings are there. Ironically, even people in women's studies may not always appreciate the quantity and quality of work that has been done and that is being done. In part, this may be the result of ignorance, or, in part, it may be the result of a deformation of one of the best convictions behind women's studies: that each woman should use her own consciousness as a primary instrument with which to define her own life; that each woman should serve as the witness of her own experience. Now that women's studies has a bit of a tradition, we need to find a judicious balance between the claims of personal authority and the waste of re-inventing the wheel that occurs when non-personal authority is rejected.

The ideas and data that women's studies can provide are also, if slowly, becoming a part of academic institutions, from kindergartens to research centers. Because of our pervasive concern about relationships between the curriculum and behavior, this process is often accompanied by the attempt to have American schools embody

basic American feminist principles. Among them are the intertwined convictions that sex roles limit opportunity, particularly for women; that such limitations are intrinsically wrong; and that individuality, autonomy, and freedom are intrinsically good. For example, an "idea book" for a "mini course" for Grades 3 to 6 in the California schools gives as its "behavioral objectives":

- Recognize restrictive sex role typing;
- Examine the possibilities of dispensing with sexist stereotyping;
- Identify a variety of career choices available to them;
- Describe their feelings about sexist stereotypes;
- Predict future developments in the changing roles of men and women in society.[8]

A story that my mother told me may serve as anecdotal evidence of the electric momentum of women's studies. She lives in Whatcom County in the state of Washington, where she belongs to a study club. Each member must give an annual paper, and she has read essays on such topics as Yeats, Eliot, and Iris Murdoch. But this year, she was asked to talk on "Valiant Women of Whatcom County." To be sure, she was being requested to extend the sense of women's history as a study of the notable, but she was being requested to extend women's history where it had never been before.

As women's studies has matured and become more sophisticated, at least two major shifts in approach are taking place. First, we are thinking less about "women" as an inclusive category and more about "women" as members of a number of groups. We are more sensitive to diversity -- of time, place, class, race, ethnicity, religion, education, and family. To think in terms of differences seems less threatening than it once did. Obviously, to see what women share is still important, not only for its own sake, but because the perception can serve as a basis for organized political action. However, a pressure, perhaps largely unconscious, to focus on overarching, ahistorical likenesses among women seems to have lessened.

Next, we are referring less to women as victims and more to women as survivors and as active subjects in history. No one can forget that women have suffered and do suffer; that women have been wounded and are wounded. However, we are attending more to women's strengths. Mary Beard's Women as a Force in History is joining Simone deBeauvoir's The Second Sex as a reservoir of paradigms. As Gerda Lerner writes:

> I have in my own work learned that it is far more useful to deal with the question of victimization as one aspect of women's history, but never to regard it as the central aspect of women's history. Essentially, treating women as victims of oppression once again places them in a male-defined conceptual framework: oppressed, victimized by standards and values established by men.[9]

Though I have no systematic proof, my hunch is that the shift in the assessment of women's power is related to a rise in self-esteem and confidence of the people involved in women's studies.

Despite such changes, women's studies has also consistently pursued three major intellectual ends. They necessarily support each other. The first project is the deconstruction of false axioms, logic, and conclusions. A good example, from the University of Michigan Papers in Women's Studies, is Ruth Bleier's examination of the natural sciences, "Myths of the Biological Inferiority of Women: An Exploration of the Sociology of Biological Research."[10] The second project is the reconstruction of reality, the addition to the record of the facts of women's lives. An example of such useful compensatory knowledge is the bibliographical series in the University of Michigan Papers. The new material transforms, as it joins, our picture of human life. What Joan Kelly-Gadol says about our notion of progress could apply to much else:

> (when we)...look at ages or movements of great social change in terms of their liberation or repression of women's potential, their import for the advancement of her humanity as well as 'his'...(we see) the period or set of events with which we deal take...on a wholly different character or meaning from the normally accepted one. Indeed, what emerges is a fairly regular pattern of relative loss of status for women precisely in those periods of so-called progressive change...our notions of so-called progressive developments, such as classical Athenian civilization, the Renaissance, and the French revolution undergo a startling re-evaluation. For women, 'progress' in Athens meant concubinage and confinement of citizen wives in the gynecaeum.[11]

The third project, which I want to discuss in more detail, is the construction of general ideas and theories. They tend to be at once descriptive, i.e., a narrative

statement of events; explanatory, i.e., statement about why events occurred as they did; and prescriptive, i.e., a statement about what an appropriate response to events might be. In "Generic Man, Invisible Woman: Language, Thought, and Social Change," in the University of Michigan Papers, Ruth E. Bate both writes about reflections of sexism in ordinary languages and advocates specific changes. Inevitably, particular configurations of ideas are impure, alloyed with theories of other sources, which may be incompatible. A feminist scholar who takes Marx and Engels as her leading 19th century male mentors will have a different analysis of the origins of female oppression, and of its amelioration, than one who takes Mill as her leading 19th century male mentor.

So far, women's studies has tended to function with one major theory: that most societies have been patriarchal, although the exact meaning of this term will vary from society to society, and that the relations of the sexes have been politicized. Patriarchal worlds generally consist of two sub-worlds or spheres: 1) the male, productive, and public; and 2) the female, reproductive, and private/domestic. One of the most exciting jobs now being done in women's studies is the close, sympathetic mapping of the skills, rituals, art, strategies, and passions of female worlds. Under certain conditions, and for certain reasons, males inhabit the female world, females the male. The two halves of the dimorphic whole may be separate and equal, but more often, they are separate and unequal, different and asymmetrical. In brief, "gender hierarchies" exist.

The quest for the origins of "gender hierarchies" now compels feminist scholars, despite its difficulties. Rayna R. Reiter, for example, has speculated that we might locate three prime periods in which they were formed and then reformed. Her critical "junctures" are:

> ...the origins and effects of modern capitalism; the origins and processes of pristine state formation; and the characteristics of gender organization itself in original human society.[12]

Though not everyone would accept Reiter's hypothesis, nearly everyone in women's studies would accept her implicit sense of history as a process of change; as a series of phenomena in which beginnings may resemble and generate, but only resemble and generate, middles and ends. Such a notion of history is inseparable from the political ambitions of women's studies. The belief in the plausibility of change underpins the efforts to bring about change.

Moreover, most would agree that shifts in social, economic, and cultural forces cause change. Behind this is the assumption that social, economic, and cultural forces dictate human relations, and a simultaneous distrust of nature as an explanation of human arrangements. An otherwise foolish and sullen opponent of feminist criticism says accurately enough:

> Feminist critics find deplorable any work of art which promotes, no matter how complexly or ambivalently, an idea of women as biologically rooted and therefore limited creatures.[13]

Yet even the most rigid historical determinist must recognize that women have been associated with nature and the natural, with biology and the biological. In terms of cultural schemes, they have symbolized nature. Earth has been a mother. Hurricanes have been named Mary, not Marvin. In terms of labor, women's reproductive tasks have been thought to be more immersed in nature and less representative of the transcendent will than men's productive tasks. Many of those engaged in women's studies argue that women have not only been more closely linked to nature than men have, but that they have been less involved in the creation of culture itself than men have. Indeed, the lack of their participation in the creation of culture may help to account for their second-class status.[14]

However, such a cluster of concepts is now undergoing revision from at least two not immediately compatible groups. On the one hand, some feminist scholars accept the existence of a pervasive association between women and nature that has had distressing effects on women. They hope to retain the association, but to reverse its effects, to so transvalue it that it will become the basis for a new theology.[15] On the other hand, some anthropologists, historians, sociologists, and critics are denying the denial of a fertile relationship between women and culture. They claim that women have actively formed and transmitted art, structures of value, and patterns of behavior.[16] Some of these scholars add that women's second-class status has not been universal and that the attempt to account for it is a search for the origins of an illusion.

The arguments about women, nature, and culture are familiar. Less well-known is that concerning the permanence, the fixity, of differences between female and male. Most people in women's studies, particularly the Americans, believe that such differences, other than the obvious anatomical ones, are transitory. They may admire

or suspect androgyny, the currently fashionable belief that the ideal human mixes female and male, feminine and masculine. No matter what their attitude might be towards androgyny, they find gender distinctions largely the product of nurture, made more distasteful by the ardent support they receive from conservatives who prefer gender distinctions to be the product of God, or of His handmaiden, Nature.

However, some of the brilliant theoreticians in women's studies, particularly Europeans, think that some differences between female and male are irrevocable. Given the intellectual power and originality of the theoreticians of difference, such as Julia Kristeva, they will doubtless become increasingly influential. In the past, they tend to say, the somatic and psychic dissimilarities between female and male have been described falsely, mischievously, and with oppressive political intent. Now, our task is to express them truly, sympathetically, and with liberating political intent. So the extraordinary French writer, Hélène Cixous, proclaims:

> Woman must write her self: must write about women and bring women to writing, from which they have been driven away as violently as from their bodies--for the same reasons, by the same law, with the same fatal goal.[17]

In general, those particularly interested in theory -- be it about women or about feminism -- are restless; dissatisfied with the prevailing paradigms of women's studies; hopeful that the growing mass of micro-studies will prove to be, not an end in itself, but the necessary pre-condition of great new theories about "sex/gender systems."[18] The new scholarship about women also promises to be a source of rich ideas about the circumstances, other than death, in which sex and gender become irrelevant; about patterns of domination and submission; and about the links among public, familial, and private behavior.

Whether we prefer to deconstruct error, to reconstruct consciousness and the intellectual record, or to construct theory, people in women's studies have consistently called for an interdisciplinary approach to their subject. Such a method has been praised as a way of defeating the fragmentation of modern academic life and of winning a holistic picture of women's lives. However, as consistently, we have misjudged the difficulty of doing it. As a result, we have committed the fallacy of misplaced originality. Those of us in one discipline have said elementary things about another as if they were

revelations, an act that can have the virtue of contagious autodidactic enthusiasm, but not much else. We have also been prone to overestimate our actual interest in other disciplines. As editor of Signs, I have met a depressing amount of resistance, among those most in favor of women's studies, to actually reading essays outside their areas of expertise. A third difficulty is less internal than external. The rewards in many colleges and universities go to specialists, not to generalists. The dossiers of people in women's studies are in double jeopardy: for being in women's studies, for performing interdisciplinary forays.

We now need, not only to nourish more intellectual curiosity, but to train "translators." They will interpret the languages of one discipline to persons in another. They could also make academic discourse more intelligible and accessible to non-academics without diluting ideas or patronizing that audience. These modest hopes can flounder unless we co-operate with other interdisciplinary projects, such as American Studies or Medieval and Renaissance Studies, to overcome the institutional grumps about the interdisciplinary.

Such re-routing of the mental circuits is but one of the necessities that confronts us. We should remain wary of labelling methods of analysis and perception as "female" and "male" or "phallic." Some cultural feminists may celebrate the "female" as they repudiate the "male," the realm of logic and abstraction. This polemical genderizing of intelligence atrophies its potential. In addition, we should systematically explore the conceptual links between women's studies and men's studies, which grew in dialectical response to them. The two might collaborate to unravel relationships between sex and gender and those forces, among them fear, that prevent genuine sexual equality. One problem, easily circumvented, is the tendency of men's studies to stress male suffering, the penalties of masculinity, which deflects attention from its privileges.

Unless political forces keep their momentum, such intellectual projects will seem like sky-writing. The women's studies movement itself must stay coherent, refusing to fragment over questions such as apparent conflicts between research and activism or the ideologically sound definition of feminist scholarship. The founding conference of the National Women's Studies Association showed, on balance, the tolerance and sense of mutual dependence of various schools that we now must have. The women's movement, inside and outside of educational institutions, must continue to provide the political and social climate within which women's studies may grapple with and transform the wisdom of the status quo.

So far, my description has been mostly of women's studies in America. However, it is growing elsewhere, most rapidly in the industrial democracies of England, Western Europe, Scandinavia, Canada, Australia, and Japan. In developing countries, women's studies is often thought to be politically divisive, or politically too weak to merit consideration, or unnecessary, or trivial in comparison to the problems of poverty and population. Nevertheless, the serious study of women, whether formally linked to a women's studies movement or not, is expanding. Giving it urgency is the recognition, which Ester Boserup articulated several years ago,[19] that development may hurt women. If this is true, the process must be clearly seen, and stopped.

American scholars may find some manifestations of international women's studies surprisingly troubling. Analytical categories -- Marxist in much of Latin America, psychoanalytic and semiotic in much of France -- may seem alien. Political perceptions may seem hostile. An American woman, who finds herself marginal to the centers of American power, may hear herself described as a power broker and cultural imperialist. Though dubious of much of her country's policies, she will still be American and discover herself cast as an ambitious Other, a beneficiary of international transgressions.[20]

The contributions that women's studies can make should combine the labors of the intellectual -- clarification of consciousness, aggregation of fact, creation of categories to give coherence to facts -- and the labors of those who seek social justice -- the transformation of public structures and policies. None of these has ever been known for its ability to storm the skies of ecstasy. On the contrary, they demand patience and stamina. Yet, those of us in women's studies, despite the sufferings and sacrifices that are forced on many, do experience a certain joy. It arises, in part, because we believe that we are doing something fresh, and in the company of others. We have escaped both ennui and isolation, which, we are told, haunt the modern intellectual and scholar. This happy flight, as we fight against our marginality, is a source of our galvanizing strength.

Notes

1. For another assessment, with suggestive ideas, see Gayle Graham Yates, "Women's Studies in Its Second Phase," Women's Studies Newsletter, V, 1-2 (Winter/Spring 1977), 4-5.

2. Morris Dickstein, Gates of Eden (New York: Basic Books, 1977).

3. For one source of evidence, see Marion Kilson, "The Status of Women in Higher Education," Signs, I, 4 (Summer 1976), 935-942.

4. Princeton Project on Women in the College Curriculum, "Women in the College Curriculum: A Preliminary Report," mimeo, 1977, available from Princeton Project on Women in the College Curriculum, 308 West College, Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey 08540.

5. Ernest Gallner, "Ethnomethodology: The re-enchantment industry or the California way of subjectivity," Philosophy of the Social Sciences 5 (1975), 435. I am grateful to Ruth Barcan Marcus for bringing this article to my attention.

6. Arlie Russell Hochschild has posed this question brilliantly in "Inside the Clockwork of Male Careers," Women and the Power to Change, ed. Florence Howe (New York: McGraw Hill, 1975).

7. Printed in Women's Studies Newsletter (Winter/Spring 1977), 6.

8. Judith Johnson and Judith Stiehm, Free to Be Me (Los Angeles: University of Southern California and Joint Educational Project, 1976), p. 3.

9. Gerda Lerner, "Placing Women in History," Liberating Women's History, ed. Berenice A. Carroll (Urbana, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 1976), pp. 358-9.

10. University of Michigan Papers in Women's Studies (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Women's Studies Project, University of Michigan, June, 1976), II, 2. Other references to papers published in this series will be either to this volume or to II, 1, issued in September, 1975.

11. "Social Relations of the Sexes," Signs, I, 4 (Summer 1976), 810-11.

12. Rayna R. Reiter, "Unraveling the Problem of Origins: An Anthropological Search for Feminist Theory," (New York: Barnard College, The Women's Center, 1976), p. 15.

13. Robert Boyers, "A Case Against Feminist Criticism," Partisan Review, XLIII, 4 (1976), 607.

14. The essay most frequently cited, in near epidemic proportions, as a statement of this theory is Sherry B. Ortner, "Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?" Women, Culture and Society, ed. Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), pp. 67-87.

15. See, for example, Carol B. Christ, "Margaret Atwood: The Surfacing of Women's Spiritual Quest and Vision," Signs, II, 2 (Winter 1976), 316-330, with a response by Judith Plaskow, "On Carol Christ on Margaret Atwood: Some Theological Reflections," same issue, 331-339.

16. See Constance Sutton, Susan Makiesky, Daisy Dwyer, and Laura Klein, "Women, Knowledge, and Power," Women Cross-Culturally: Change and Challenge (Hague: Mouton, 1975), 581-600; Constance R. Sutton, "The Power to Define: Women, Culture, and Consciousness," Alienation in Contemporary Society: A Multidisciplinary Examination, ed. Roy S. Bryce-Laporte and Claudewell S. Thomas (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1976), pp. 186-198; Gaye Tuchman, "Women and the Creation of Culture," Another Voice: Feminist Perspectives on Social Life and Social Science, ed. Marcia Millman and Rosabeth Moss Kanter (Garden City, New York: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1975), pp. 171-202.

17. Hélène Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa," trans. Keith Cohen and Paula Cohen, Signs, I, 4 (Summer 1976), 875.

18. I take the term from Gayle Rubin's brilliant synthesis of anthropological, Marxist, and psychoanalytical concepts, "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex," Toward an Anthropology of Women, ed. Rayna R. Reiter (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975), pp. 157-210.

19. Ester Boserup, Woman's Role in Economic Development (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1970).

20. A division of opinion among Third World and American women occurred at the Conference on Women and Development, held at Wellesley College, June, 1976.

On Teaching Women's Studies

Ellen Morgan

Writing in the Winter/Spring 1977 issue of the Women's Studies Newsletter, Gayle Graham Yates says that people want to teach women's studies for a variety of reasons: "to be role models for women students and for the society...to bring about ideological acceptance of specific forms of thought...to carry out specific bits of research about women." But women's studies itself, she notes, "seeks to transform values and to muster the facts to bring about transformation and change that will reverberate in society [italics mine]." Women's studies, Yates argues, is not simply a matter--in the words of the old truism about education--of transmitting facts and values.[1]

In the same issue of the Newsletter, the Constitution of the National Women's Studies Association states that "feminist education is a process deeply rooted in the women's movement and remains accountable to that community." The Constitution defines women's studies as "the educational strategy of a breakthrough in consciousness and knowledge" and goes on to say: "The uniqueness of women's studies has been its refusal to accept sterile divisions between academy and community, between the growth of the mind and the health of the body, between intellect and passion, between the individual and society. Women's studies, then, is equipping women not only to enter society as whole and productive human beings, but to transform it [italics mine]."[2]

Both logic and experience tell us that it is but an easy step from this natural activism that characterizes our enterprise as teachers of women's studies, to large-scale breakthroughs in our students' consciousness. Our classrooms do change and transform the values of a significant number of our students. But are we equipping these students to enter society ready to participate in social change?

I do not think it is enough to raise consciousness and "muster the facts." In practice, this amounts to drawing at least some of our students into a state of alienation from their culture and then just leaving them there. Alienation seems to me to be a perfectly natural and reasonable--and even necessary--initial response to learning the basic facts about patriarchal society. But to feel radically estranged from one's culture--as our most committed students may come, through us, to feel--can be extremely painful and can generate anger so intense that it becomes immobilizing.

There are ways to cope with alienation; and one can survive the experience of the breakthrough in consciousness and knowledge with the capacity to work productively, whether through an organized movement or otherwise, for social change. But one must learn how. I do not think our job as teachers of women's studies is completed until we have helped our students discover some clues about how to live as feminists in their society, despite its sexism, without sacrificing too much of their happiness, or betraying their dignity as women and their feminism.

I am not talking about teachers' becoming pseudo-therapists. There are relevant facts, theories, and perspectives which psychology, sociology, history, literature, and other disciplines can contribute. It is true that time and experience, and sometimes suffering, often eventually impart the same information, and that there is no substitute for "living." But we are teachers because we do not think time, experience, and suffering alone are always the best ways to learn. I believe we very possibly can save our students time and energy which might otherwise be unavailable to them for productive work.

What is it that students need to learn in connection with the courses we are presently offering on the psychology of women, the sociology of sex-roles, the history of women, literature by and about women, and so on? To begin with, I think they need to learn something of the psychology of alienation. This can be taught in literature as well as in psychology courses. We often teach about the psychology of oppression, showing students how oppressed people tend to admire and imitate their oppressors and disparage themselves. But what happens to the psyches of oppressed people who decide that something unfair in society--in which they participate to the point of complicity, and to which they have a need to belong--rather than some inferiority in themselves, is responsible for their status? What happens to their psychic tie to that society? To their relationship to themselves?

Then it seems to me our students need to learn something about the psychology and sociology of sex-role change. Standard materials from psychology, sociology, anthropology, and literature can be used as study tools. We teach them about the traditional roles in various cultures and the psychological and sociological consequences of these roles. We sometimes explore possible alternatives to the traditional roles. But special attention is due also to the situation in which the students now find themselves. How do individuals,

groups within societies, and societies at large tend to respond when roles are in a state of flux and transition? Which patterns seem to be operating today between women and men? Among women?

Finally, I think our students need to learn about the kinds of behavior oppressed people have historically adopted in trying to change their situation. Which kinds have been effective, and which ineffective or counterproductive in furthering their interests?

The outcome of teaching these things to our students will certainly not be their instant acquisition of skills with which to cope with alienation and role shift and the overall problem of female oppression. But I think there are some specific ways in which they will be better equipped to enter and help transform society.

First, they will not have to spend energy figuring out whether it is "okay" to feel as intensely angry about sexism and as elated about their newly found female heritage as they do. They will be more able to see themselves as having the reactions that are characteristic of people in similar circumstances, and to understand their own needs and keep their goals in focus. They may have a proportionately increased insight into the experience of other oppressed people.

Second, they will be somewhat better prepared to understand and deal with the reactions they will encounter among both their feminist allies and other people. They will have some grasp of the logic of the resistance they will meet; and they will have some basis for understanding the "horizontal hostility" as well as the true nature, uses, and abuses of solidarity structures and bonds (such as sisterhood) that are part of the dynamics of group social struggle.

Third, they should be somewhat more sophisticated about choosing appropriate types of action. They will not have to repeat some of the motions against which history stands as a warning.

It has been my experience as an activist in the Women's Liberation Movement that has convinced me that in addition to raising consciousness and providing facts about women, we need to raise consciousness and provide facts about working toward social change. My activist colleagues and I learned a few years ago, at the beginning of the Movement, as our students learn today, to recognize and deplore sexism and to take pride in our femaleness instead of disparaging it. But many of us were nevertheless not very well prepared at that point to work within or outside a

movement for alterations in society. Not only had we been radically estranged from our culture by our new knowledge and consciousness, but we had not developed very clear ideas about how to cope with our own anger and feelings of isolation and with the responses of others to us; nor had we discovered how to devise effective actions to advance our cause. We lost valuable people under these conditions; some of them saw withdrawal from feminism and feminist consciousness as the only alternative to coming unhinged. We lost some of our precious social-change energies to the purely private sphere, and dissipated some in explosions of sterile rage that led nowhere and diverted us from working toward our goals. And we made some costly tactical errors that I think would have been much less likely had we had more understanding of our situation--had we studied it.

Because we did not know anything in advance about alienation, we did not know exactly what to make of our anger, especially when it strained our dealings with family and others close to us. If the truth be told, a good many of us were plagued by disturbing suspicions that these other people were right--maybe we were being unreasonable and unfair, maybe we were overreacting, maybe our cause was not fully justified, maybe so many "authorities" and centuries could not be wrong, maybe we were slightly crazy. Knowing something about the psychic patterns to expect in ourselves--the patterns people characteristically exhibit when they become estranged from their culture--would have made us less vulnerable to self-doubt and confusion.

But far more important, it could have made us more aware of our own suddenly burgeoning psychic needs, and better able to attend to them. People go from alienation into activism too often without having an accurate notion of the psychic toll they are paying and will go on paying. They neglect to provide themselves with the opportunities for psychic rest and pleasure that are necessary in order to prevent burnout. Sometimes they are ignorantly suspicious of the sincerity of other activists who do make sure their lives include the things--friends, family, books, good food, music, hobbies, sports, whatever they be--that are sustaining, healing, and balancing to them. Neophyte activists also too seldom understand their own psychology well enough to see that unless they set themselves some short-term goals that can be achieved relatively easily, and get busy achieving them, feelings of impotence will fan the fires of their anger into uncontrollable proportions. Instead they set themselves giant long-range

goals (eliminating sexism from education, stopping job discrimination) which end up making them feel dwarfed by inadequacy and increasingly enraged. They learn the hard way that while it is important for them to articulate their long-range goals and work toward them, they also need to structure in small successes all along the way.

If we women's studies teachers want to equip our students to go into their society able to change it, then it seems to me that we need to help them gain some insight into the strength of their needs for feeling at home in their culture, and into the patterns of psychic vulnerability that come with cultural alienation. The students' twenty-year-old enthusiasm for defying "the Establishment," mixed as it is with twenty-year-old dependencies and insecurities, will not carry them through, and in any case, being twenty is temporary.

The second area in which my Movement colleagues and I could have been much better prepared for our work in those years was in knowledge of the way people in groups and society at large react when the social role structure is in the process of being challenged and changed. We did not know what to expect from people outside feminist circles or how to deal with the dynamics among feminists.

In practice this meant that we sometimes approached non-feminist women and men in counterproductive ways, almost forcing them to adopt postures of opposition to us. More significant, we often took easily predictable batterings harder than necessary because we were unable to anticipate them, understand their impersonal character, and maintain an appropriate amount of personal detachment.

Even more pronounced than our difficulties with those outside the feminist camp were our problems with the dynamics among feminists in those days. We did not know that as long as people struggling to make changes in society continue to see themselves as almost powerless, and their task as almost impossible, they tend to turn against <u>each other</u>. So we were naively shocked by, and not equipped to handle, the ideological baiting, the descents into dogma and factionalism, the testing, the power jockeying, and the acrimonious expressions of distrust among ourselves. Substantial numbers of people left the Movement, and the Movement itself was diverted from its central goals by a rhetoric that led it away from the hard work of changing--instead of merely denouncing and withdrawing from--society. As we began to make some progress in the surrounding society, we did, of course, learn to use our frustration better.

In response to our growing confidence in our effectiveness as a group, the horizontal hostility began to diminish, and the bonding phenomenon of sisterhood appeared. But then our ignorance once again put us at a disadvantage. Untutored about the nature and function of solidarity mechanisms in groups working for social change, we formed some sadly misguided expectations of sisterhood and became dangerously disillusioned when it did not fulfill them.

If we, as women's studies teachers, want to equip our students to enter and try to change society, then I think we need to give them enough insight into the sociology and social psychology of role change that they will be as ready as possible to meet the resistance of today's non-feminists and the dynamics among today's feminists. These students naturally will not have to deal with exactly the same problems as did their Movement predecessors; the culture has been altered by the efforts of those years, and feminist dynamics have correspondingly changed. And most of the students will not be activists in the same "Movement" sense. But this generation of students will still find a world in which such preparation will make it much easier to be a feminist.

The third area in which my feminist colleagues and I could have been much better prepared for our work as we began it several years ago was in knowledge about the various types of action from which, given our circumstances, we could choose in trying to reach our goals.

Perhaps I need to interject at this point that neither in the foregoing discussion, nor in the remarks I am about to make about action, am I intending to imply that all struggles for social change are alike. The contours of alienation and of group reaction to role change vary, of course, according to their placement in history, and actions that are fitting at one time are not necessarily fitting at others. But there <u>is</u> something to be learned from the past, from other social struggles. There are certain simple "laws" which apply regardless of historical circumstances, and it is these "laws" (like people's need for their community and their vulnerability when estranged from it, and like basic group patterns of reaction to role change) that I feel would-be change-agents need to learn at the first possible opportunity, and preferably not by painful trial and error.

To return to the subject of action, it was not exactly that my colleagues and I in the Movement would have profited from a general course on the history of action for social change; and certainly there could have been no course on what specific actions we should take. But I think we would have benefited enormously had we had, from the outset, some ideas about the types of results that can be expected to follow from various categories of action. We needed criteria for judging whether a given kind of action was likely to prove beneficial to us in a given situation by furthering given interests. Such criteria would probably have served the added function of helping us to set achievable proximate goals and to develop long-range goals that bore clearly-defined relationships to practical programs of action.

As I look back on the early phases of the Movement, I can see undiscriminating feminist involvement in three types of action:

a) action which prevented some type of victimization, but only at the price of some kinds of self-mutilation. That this type of action would seem to any sane person undesirable unless no better alternative were present has not prevented history from being witness to many instances of it in situations where there were better alternatives.

b) action which was limited to helping victims to survive oppression or victimization. This type of action is vitally important and necessary, and very commendable. But because it does not put an end to the victimization, it cannot be permitted to engage all the energies of a social struggle. It is not a solution to the underlying problems, and by itself, is insufficient.

c) action which helped to disarm the victimizing or oppressing forces. This type of action differs from that geared to helping victims survive in a crucial way. It permits a stance that is essentially active rather than reactive. One is still working, to be sure, within the limits of the oppression. But instead of using the bulk of one's energy to combat the victimization on the terms set by its perpetrators, one begins by setting one's own terms, in the form of goals, and then one spends the bulk of one's energy attempting to realize them.

If, as teachers of women's studies, we want to equip our students to be, in whatever sense they may choose, agents of social change, then I think we need to help them learn something about criteria for distinguishing among and wisely selecting types of action. They should be able to identify obvious traps before falling into them. Why should they have to make mistakes that have been made before when their education can prevent that by transmitting to them the insights won from people's past mistakes?

In conclusion, what I am suggesting is:

-- that we reconsider the women's studies classroom in the light of our stated aim of equipping our students to effect changes in society, and

-- that we not stop with teaching about women and their condition, but go on to offer whatever insights, theories, facts, and perspectives are proving specially relevant to the continuing efforts of women to liberate themselves.

We have gone on record that feminist education is not about new knowledge and consciousness only for their own sake, but also for the sake of "bringing about transformation and change that will reverberate in society."

Notes

1. Gayle Graham Yates, "Women's Studies in Its Second Phase," Women's Studies Newsletter, 5 (Winter/Spring 1977), 4-5.

2. "Constitution of the NWSA," Women's Studies Newsletter, 5 (Winter/Spring 1977), 6.

Culture Versus Economics: A Case of Fornication in Northampton in the 1740's*

Kathryn Kish Sklar

This essay is a microscopic view of a church trial in Northampton, Massachusetts in the 1740's. A close reading of the documents of the case reveals a relatively unobserved dimension of female experience in eighteenth-century New England: a bastard birth within a propertied family.

My research on this case is part of a larger project in which I am comparing female religious participation in Northampton between 1740 and 1840, to that of another Massachusetts town--Sutton, in Worcester County. Ultimately this comparison focuses on the means by which women increased their participation in the public institutions of their communities - particularly church, schooling, and poor relief. At this stage I am interested in learning the extent to which the First Congregational Church in each community was capable of responding to the needs and interests of its female members. In each community I am studying social conflicts that seem to reveal the forces promoting and inhibiting such a response. In Northampton the influence of an economic and social elite seemed to inhibit religious innovation beneficial to average women, while in Sutton the influence of the middling majority seemed to promote religious innovation beneficial to average women.

Here I want to explore one example of religious conflict in Northampton in the 1740's. This case of church discipline shows, on the one hand, the cultural factor of religion responding in innovative ways to the needs and interests of average women, and on the other hand, it reveals the tactics by which an elite family successfully opposed such innovation.

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*Earlier versions of this paper were presented at the University of Michigan Research on Women Seminar, April 1977; and the American Studies Association Biennial Meeting, October 1977.

I am grateful to David Hall of Boston University and Patricia Tracy of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, for calling my attention to the basic documents of the case in the papers of Joseph Hawley and Jonathan Edwards. I am grateful to the members of the Research on Women Seminar at the University of Michigan; Richard Bushman; David Hall; Tiziana Rota; Daniel Scott Smith; and Patricia Tracy for their comments on earlier versions of this paper.

Since this case was heard by both civil and religious tribunals, it is possible for us to compare their deliberations, and see to what degree the cultural factor of religion differed from the civil court system in the issues it considered or the actions it took.

This case indirectly documents the experience of a Northampton woman named Martha Root, who, without the benefit of marriage, gave birth to twins sometime before February of 1748. Her experience is known to us through documents penned by and preserved in the papers of two powerful men: the Reverend Jonathan Edwards and Joseph Hawley, Esquire. Her life intersected theirs after her fornication with Joseph Hawley's younger brother, Elisha.

The case had three basic events: 1) a civil settlement in May 1748, in which Martha Root received L155 from Elisha Hawley "in full satisfaction for and towards the Support and maintenance of a Bastard Child, now living;" 2) a vote by the "brethern" of the First Church sometime before August, 1748, to excommunicate Elisha for refusing to marry Martha Root; 3) a vote by a Council of Ministers called in June, 1749, "to hear a matter of Grievances between the Church and Hawley," and to consider "whether it appears [to] this Council to be the Duty of Lt. Elisha Hawley to marry Martha Root with whom he has been guilty of fornication...and also rather because she lays a Child to him that is now living."[1]

At the civil stage Martha Root received a rather handsome cash settlement. She also promised:

> that never will hereafter myself or by any other acting for or under me ask, Sue for, or Demand Anything for the future maintenance of the Child.

Nevertheless the church took up the issue and voted to excommunicate Elisha. Jonathan Edwards' innovative defense of that vote before the Council of Ministers argued that a cash payment was inadequate compensation for the damage Elisha had done. The Council, however, ruled in favor of Elisha, concluding:

> we are far from determining that Lt. Hawley is not bound in conscience to marry Martha Root [but] that it doesn't appear to us...[illegible] that it is his duty. We therefore determine it must be left to the determination of his own conscience.[2]

The Council also recommended that the First Church "receive Mr. Hawley (upon his making a penitent confession of the Sin of fornication) to their Christian charity and fellowship."

Ultimately, therefore, the cultural factor of religion failed to support Martha Root's claim to more than the civil settlement she had already received. The Justices of the Peace who sat as judges in the Hampshire County Court in 1748 and the Ministers who convened in Council a year later inhabited a common set of cultural values and social structures, and they arrived at the same conclusion. Nevertheless there were significant differences between the civil and religious arenas in the degree to which each explicitly confronted and stated the cultural values and social structures that shaped the case. Cultural values relating to the case were explicitly confronted and debated in the religious arena, but were only implicit in the civil case. On the other hand social structures governing the case were explicitly stated in the civil agreement, but were only implicit in the religious debate. The decisions of Court and Council supported one another, but they expressed different aspects of their culture and society. Perhaps because the religious arena explicitly confronted gender inequalities, it also proved more flexible and innovative than the civil arena.

Thanks to the fact that Elisha was packed off to a military career (commissioned Lieutenant in March, 1747 by his uncle, Colonel John Stoddard, and appointed commander of Fort Massachusetts), correspondence between Joseph and Elisha survives to inform us about both civil and religious proceedings. Relative to the former, Joseph wrote Elisha in February, 1748:

> As to your affair that I was to manage I tried for an agreement before Court [but they] insisted on L150 down which I thought was too much considering what risque there is of the Ch^{ds} life. I therefore thought best to tarry awhile longer before I concluded the affair, and till I could have some account of yr. mind, not doubting but I could obtain a continuance of yr. Recognizance, which accordingly I did tho with some difficulty...I hope before next session I Shall accomodate the affair upon easier Terms than they Seem at present to insist upon, if not I should think it best to abide by the order of the Court.[3]

Without engaging in unseemly opposition to the court, Joseph was intent on obtaining the best bargain possible for Hawley family interests.

Martha's receipt of L155 in May shows that the child lived, and that the Hawleys did not get off as cheaply as Joseph had hoped. Since we have no record of the court proceedings, we do not know what considerations were raised there or what principles were used to determine the sum of L155. The civil settlement referred only to child support.

That document, which was signed by Martha and two witnesses, but not by Elisha, began:

> Know all men by these present that I Martha Root of Northampton in the County of Hampshire in the Province of the Massachusetts Bay in New England, Spinster, have received of Elisha Hawley of Northampton, Gentleman, the Sum of One Hundred and fifty-five pounds Old Tenor....

In the titles it appended to their names, calling him a "gentleman" and her a "spinster," the settlement embodied social distinctions of class and sex. His title was gender-specific and class-specific, while hers was gender-specific and without reference to class. His implied that class distinctions might have informed their civil agreement. Hers implied that the settlement was also shaped by gender distinctions that transcended class boundaries.

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, "spinster" had by 1650 changed from an occupational appendage for some women regardless of marital status, to a legal term embracing "all unmarried women from the viscount's daughter downward." It was not until the Nineteenth Century that "spinster" came primarily to mean an older woman who has never married or an "old maid." Most of those who knew her probably thought of Martha as "the daughter of Hezekiah Root," but the new legal usage of "spinster" provided a convenient way of identifying her without naming her father. Since all unmarried men were not similarly stripped of their social titles and called "bachelors," "spinster" was a term that embodied gender inequalities that transcended class inequalities.

Explicit class inequalities and implicit gender inequalities might explain why the agreement did not mention damages to Martha's reputation, nor any responsibility Elisha bore to Martha herself. Her payment was only for child support:

> in full satisfaction for and towards the Support and maintenance of a Bastard Child born of my Body now living, which child with Another Sometime deceased which was a Twin with the first mentioned Child, I the said Martha Charged upon the said Elisha as their father.

Were the class and gender inequalities expressed and implied by "gentleman" and "spinster" large enough to justify the cultural and social anomaly that they and their child represented in the community? Apparently not, and this was one reason the case was tried again in the religious arena.

Martha was the daughter of Hezekiah and Martha Root, born sometime around 1720, the fourth of eight children, the second of four daughters. Although Hezekiah's estate was less than three-fifths the value listed for Widow Rebekah Hawley and her two sons in 1739, Martha's father ranked among the wealthiest fourth of the population, and almost among the wealthiest fifth. An important sign of the family's standing was the marriage of Martha's older sister, Dorothy, at the age of 25 to Charles Phelps, a wealthy Justice of the Peace in Hadley.[4]

In 1748 Martha was at age of 28 the family's oldest unmarried daughter. Five other siblings were probably still living at home, Simon age 30, Jemina age 26, Joseph age 19, Hannah age 17, and Orlando age 14. Although her younger sister Hannah never married, Jemina married in 1753, age 31, and Martha herself married John Miller and left Northampton in 1754, age 34. Therefore, at the time of her fornication with Elisha, Martha was a primary candidate for marriage in a family whose social standing placed them among the solid citizenry of the town.

Bastard births among propertied families were highly unusual. The recorded incidence of illegitimacy in eighteenth century New England has been estimated on an annual basis as occurring to approximately 1 in every 200 unmarried women of child-bearing age. While over a period of ten years this would include 10 in every 200 (or 5% of the female population at risk), most of these women were much poorer than Martha Root, and came from economic groups in which male desertion was much more frequent than it was among propertied families.[5] Martha's paternity settlement of L155 was, as a lump sum, far greater than the weekly support of four-six shillings usually awarded by the Court of Common Pleas to prevent bastardy cases from becoming cases requiring poor relief. Given her family's economic resources, this sum came close to the amount she might be expected to receive as a dowry from her father. Averaged over ten years, however, the approximate length of time before a child could be apprenticed and earn his or her own support, Martha's award amounted to only six shillings a week. From one point of view, therefore, this settlement

provided Martha with a dowry commensurate with her family's wealth. From another point of view, however, it did not provide her child with economic advantages comensurate with legitimate Hawley birth. It might have given Martha a new start in life and it possibly relieved her father from dowry expense when she married in 1754, but it was not sufficient to establish her in a household of her own, and it placed primary responsibility for the child's future with her.

Although Martha and Elisha went their individual and separate ways after 1748, their civil solution left many collective questions unanswered. The chief of these was: What if their example should be followed by others? The urgency of this question was probably increased by the fact that premarital pregnancy rates were rising rapidly in New England. In their article on "Premarital Pregnancy in America, 1640-1971," Michael Hindus and Daniel Smith estimated that the number of brides who were pregnant at marriage increased from one in ten around 1710 to one in three by 1790. They concluded, however, that the vast majority of premarital pregnancies were quickly followed by marriage, resulting in few births outside of marriage. Hindus and Smith support this conclusion by comparing the proportion of premarital pregnancies among couples in which the "bride's father was of higher economic standing than the "groom's" father to the proportion among couples (like Elisha and Martha) in which the "bride's" father was of lower economic standing than the "groom's." They assume that a smaller proportion of premarital pregnancies among the latter group might indicate the presence of concealed bastard births or of pregnancies not followed by marriage. Since the proportion of premarital pregnancies was the same in both groups, however, the authors conclude that community coercion "overcame the more serious consequences of pregnancy for women."[6] Martha's experience was therefore quite unusual. She, Elisha, and their illegitimate child constituted a sharp cultural and social anomaly in their community, which probably could not be sustained through economic advantage or class privilege alone.

Moreover, economic differences between the Hawleys and Roots did not decisively distinguish them as members of different classes. Although their legal settlement identified Elisha as a "Gentleman," he might just as accurately have been called a "tradesman." Like that of most elite families in New England, the Hawley estate was not wealthy enough to support idle sons. Although Elisha's family was considerably wealthier

than Martha's, he, like her father and brothers, needed to work for a living. Lacking a college education, Elisha had in 1746 at the age of 23 entered a business partnership with his only sibling and older brother, Joseph. They traded in hides, exporting from their region to Rhode Island "skins" that were supplied by the region's other local export: pickled meat.[7]

Whatever the validity of Elisha's claim to be a "gentleman," it probably rested on considerations of lineage or descent rather than economic considerations per se. The cultural and social significance of kinship in New England during this period meant that Elisha's mother inherited and presumably passed on to her sons much of the prestige of her illustrious father, the Reverend Solomon Stoddard. Stoddard was the most powerful religious and political leader in the Connecticut Valley between 1680 and his death in 1729. Rebekah was the 11th child of Solomon and Esther Stoddard, the only daughter (of six) who did not marry a minister, and the only daughter who remained in the town of her birth after marriage. She became a widow in 1736 when her merchant-farmer husband, Joseph Hawley, committed suicide by cutting his throat. Trumbull's History of Northampton described Rebekah as a person of "strong prejudices and aristocratic tendencies," who was also "an expert dairy woman," making more butter and cheese "than any other person in town," and marketing her products throughout the region.[8] Her privileged position in the community was marked by her seating allotment in church. Rather than sitting with the majority of the community's widows on the women's side of the aisle, she sat in a pew adjoining the minister's family, with her brother, John Stoddard, by far the wealthiest and most influential man in town until his death in June of 1748.

If anyone blocked Elisha's marriage to Martha on the basis of class or lineage considerations, it was probably Rebekah Hawley. Elisha himself seems to have remained passive throughout the event, and Joseph, who represented the family's interests in both civil and religious proceedings, was probably implementing his mother's intentions. Her goal was presumably to preserve Elisha for a later and more appropriate marriage, which was indeed consumated in 1751 when Elisha married Elizabeth Pomeroy, whose father ranked in the wealthiest tenth of the taxed population and was a deacon in the church.[9] This goal of a reputable marriage for Elisha was threatened in 1748, however, when the First Congregational Church voted to excommunicate him for refusing to marry Martha Root. While the church had no

legal power to force couples to marry, excommunication could conceivably place Elisha under a degree of community censure that would severely limit his ability to marry respectably later.[10]

We first hear of Elisha's excommunication in a letter to him from Joseph in December, 1748. At that time Joseph was not unduly alarmed. He felt that the church was taking a stronger stand than the occasion warranted, but he saw no vital threat to Hawley family interests. That letter began:

> I believe [it] best for you to come Down as soon as you Can with any convenience. I have thought a great deal of your affair. Am abundantly clear in it that No Church on earth Can of their own [illegible] inforce a matrimony in Such Case until...two points are fully proved vis. absolute virginity and enticement [by] the man.[11]

Assuming that these points could not be proven, Joseph continued:

> I should have no regard at all to anything they pretended to do authoritatively in the particular of matrimony, nor would I attempt or labour to prove anything against her Since the burden of proof beyond all Disputes lies wholly on either the woman or the Church.

Joseph maintained that the church's actions also went against the wishes of the Root family, saying:

> the woman declares against taking you in the form the church talk of as also her father and mother. So that if they proceed they would impose more than the Jewish Yoke which St. Peter declared Neither the Jews in his time nor Their fathers were able to bear.

Joseph meant that the requirement of marriage by the church would be similar to the requirement of circumscision among the early Christians - imposing arcane articles of faith that were unnecessary to Christian belief. His advice struck an optimistic note, but ended obscurely with a reference to Elisha's private conscience.

> I would therefore at present let the Church take what course They would, offer them proper Confession and rest the matter. As to matrimony, I would do what I knew was

> right in Conscience and before God, if there was anything [illegible]...that was particularly binding that No body else knew of.

Joseph might be implying something like the following: whatever binding commitments you may have made are a matter for you and God alone. I don't want to hear about them and neither does anyone else. If you both share guilt of enticement and/or she cannot prove "absolute virginity," that is all that matters. What this letter did not count on was a minister who was willing to argue for matrimony even though the woman might share the guilt of enticement and might not have been a virgin at the time of her fornication.

Although no church records survive from these years to tell whether or when Martha confessed the sin of fornication before the church, we can assume that she did so long before this letter was written. Probably she and definitely Elisha and Joseph, were church members.[12] If, as Joseph's letter indicated, Martha and her parents were indifferent to Elisha's excommunication, that might have been due to their interest in material rather than honorific compensation, or due to intimidation by the Hawley family. Nevertheless Martha might have derived personal satisfaction as well as revenge from Elisha's excommunication, since the congregation's censure of him implied that she was a marriageable woman who deserved more than she got, rather than a lascivious woman who received the treatment she deserved.

Since Joseph raised no procedural objections in his earlier letter discussing the church's actions, we can assume that Elisha's excommunication was, as provided for in the Cambridge Platform, by a majority vote of the "brethren" or male church members.[13] Such a vote needed pastoral approval, and probably occurred after a sermon on the topic. It seems quite likely that procedures in Elisha's excommunication resembled those in an earlier case of church discipline related to sex, the infamous "bad books" episode four years earlier. Then, according to Sereno Dwight, at the conclusion of Sunday worship, Jonathan Edwards, "desired the brethren of the church to stop, told them what evidence and information he had received, and put the question to them."[14]

A form of community ostracism designed to correct offensive behavior, excommunication was prevented by law from affecting a citizen's legal or political rights, and in Elisha's case it was largely immaterial, since his military duties required him to be absent from Northampton anyway. His excommunication doubtlessly mattered more to his mother than it did to Elisha himself. Joseph probably assisted his mother in estimating

the family's ability to stare-down community opinion and still obtain a more appropriate marriage for Elisha later. Joseph was studying law at the time, and soon gave up leather trading for a legal and political career that led to prominence on a provincial scale during and after the Revolution. In 1748, the same year as Martha's civil settlement, Joseph was elected to the Northampton Board of Selectmen, and three years later he was elected to represent the town in the Massachusetts assembly.[15] Sometime between December and June the Hawleys decided to appeal their congregation's decision and began appeal processes leading to the convening of a Council of Ministers in June of 1749.

We have two sets of rather remarkable documents from that Council, showing the arguments that Jonathan Edwards made in defense of the action taken by Northampton's First Church and those Joseph Hawley made on behalf of his family's interests. The report of the Council, preserved in Hawley's papers, began by naming the five ministers from Hampshire County who convened "at the desire of the First Church of Northampton and Elisha Hawley to hear a matter of Grievances," and to determine:

> whether it appears...to be the Duty of Lt. Elisha Hawley to Marry Martha Root with whom he has been guilty of fornication...and also rather because she lays a child to him that is now living.

Edwards' remarks on this occasion were almost certainly those contained in six pages of undated notes in his hand entitled:

> SOME REASONS BRIEFLY HINTED AT, WHY THOSE RULES EXODUS 22.16 & DEUT 22.28 RELATING TO THE OBLIGATION OF A MAN TO MARRY A VIRGIN THAT HE HAD HUMBLED, OUGHT TO BE ESTEEMED, AS TO THE SUBSTANCE OF THEM, AS MORAL AND OF PERPETUAL OBLIGATION: WITH HINTS OF ANSWERS TO OBJECTIONS.[16]

The main bulk of Edwards' argument was devoted to refuting the notion that Old Testament strictures calling for marriage in such cases were culturally and morally irrelevant to present-day New England. Some laws might be "peculiar [to] the state and circumstances of the Israelite nation," and therefore no longer were observed, he acknowledged, but others remained obligatory. In those, he said, "there is some equity or some consonance to the general nature and order and reason of things, evident in the precepts themselves." Edwards argued

that "this ground in reason is expressly pointed forth" in Deuteronomy 22:28, which provided a reason for prescribing that:

> If a man meets a virgin who is not betrothed, and seizes her and lies with her and they are found, then the man who lay with her shall give the father of the young woman fifty shekels of silver, and she shall be his wife, because he has viclated her.

Concluding that "the rules in question," were doubly grounded in reason, Edwards applied them to the present in terms that did not mention virginity or seizure by the male as necessary to their application, saying:

> The words can't be reasonably understood otherwise than thus. Seeing he hath humbled her, and taken the liberty to use her as his wife, and as tis proper none should use any woman but a wife; therefore tis FIT & SUITABLE that she should indeed be his wife, seeing he has made so bold with her, and had her once, tis fit he should have her always, and not put her away all his days. Tis utterly unfit man should think to put away at their pleasure, those whom they have seen cause for their pleasure, thus to unite themselves to.

Far more explicit about the cultural values of the case relating to sexual behavior, Edwards referred only implicitly to the class differences or social structures governing it. Arguing that the payment of money did not erase the moral obligation, but rather pointed to its existence, he distinguished between some cases in which payment rather than marriage took place, and other "ordinary" cases of fornication, saying:

> If it should be allowed to be possible in some cases for the man to make reparation in some cases without marrying the woman, yet it will not follow that it is not a thing of moral obligation that he should... at least in all ordinary cases, because the well being of society and the nature of things may require not only that reparation should be made by something that is equivalent in weight and value, but also consonant to the particular nature of the injury.

The "ordinary" quality of this case probably had to do with the fact that Martha and Elisha were both among the

town's propertied families, since ordinarily among this diverse group, private interests succumbed to cultural imperative, and premarital pregnancy was followed by marriage.

In conclusion, Edwards drew the Council's attention to the cultural factors that transcended the civil elements of the case, and to collective considerations that transcended private relationships. He was not arguing, he said, "merely that justice [be] done to the woman or the repairing the outward injury done to her...For God's law in this case has not only regard to particular temporal rights and privileges of the parties served, but to the surety of their words, and the order, decency and health of human society in general."

After Edwards' remarks the Council moved to a different level of testimony, perhaps following another set of undated notes in Edwards' hand, which outlined procedures for the day's events. Those notes said that "Lt. Hawley" would have the floor first in his "endeavor to prove that she has been a person of...lascivious character before his acquaintance with her," and that any such "allegations against Martha Root were to be brought to the pastor in writing a week before the public hearing."[17] Then Martha would testify and "be allowed to prove that he enticed her [and] that he is of a lascivious character." In addition, Edwards noted that "she be allowed opportunity if she pleases and thinks she is able to prove that he was acquainted with those facts before his fornication."

Although we do not know what Martha said on this occasion, her minister provided her with the strongest possible opportunity to argue that Elisha should not be allowed to abandon her and their child simply because she was not raped or was not a virgin at the time of their union. Whether or not Edwards' remarks or Martha's testimony seemed to sway the Council, Joseph Hawley apparently thought the truth of the matter was not sufficient to sustain Hawley interests, for, as he later acknowledged, he testified falsely before the council about Martha's character.

Hawley's apology to Martha Root, written a year later, in August of 1750, had a self-justifying and defensive tone suggesting it was written in response to outside pressure, rather than as a voluntary act. His papers contain two copies, each with cautious editorial adjustments. Joseph's apology indicates the degree to which cultural values relating to sex were explicitly examined in the religious proceedings. It also indicates the degree to which class or social

structures remained implicit in the religious arena in this test of Joseph's word against Martha's. That apology began:

> When I was before the Ecclesiastical Council which sat at Northampton to determine a dispute between the First Church of Northampton and my Brother respecting his Obligation to marry you, In giving as Evidence to the Council to prove if you had been industrious in seeking my brother's Company for some time before you charged him with being lustfully familiar with you, among other things I said that within about the space of half a year...together I had seen you in our street (as I judged) forty several times, putting a Certain number for an uncertain. And this I did not doubt, but that at least it was so often. And further that I had seen you in almost all parts of our street, and all Corners by the Bridge and near the Schoolhouse. Now so far as this represented the matter beyond the truth I not only so far wronged the truth but injured you.[18]

Joseph's apology avoided admission of serious injury, however, continuing:

> Though it is true that I frequently saw you in our street, within a space of half a year, and more frequently than any other of your father's family. Yet I don't suppose that I saw you then more than once every week... and as to the other particular viz. that I had seen you at the above mentioned Corners, or places where the ways meet, I acknowledge I said it precipitiously and presumptuously and tho I remember other places in particular, where I have seen you in our street, yet I have no particular remembrance if I ever before that time saw you those above mentioned places, and I said it through want of due consideration, and presuming it because I had seen you frequently our way.

Joseph concluded on a public note:

> I acted presumptuously. For which I am heartily sorry, and in observance of the Divine rule James 5.16, I confess this to you, and do freely and humbly ask your pardon and forgiveness and shall be always ready to own what is above written.

Joseph's apology contradicted his earlier letter to Elisha in which he said "he would not attempt or labour to prove anything against her, since the burden of proof...lies wholly on either the woman or the Church." Between the time that letter was written and the church Council concluded their deliberations, the burden of proof seems to have shifted from Martha and the church to the Hawley family.

Joseph's moral resources were equal to the occasion, and included both the willingness to provide false testimony to defend his family's interests, and the ability to acknowledge his falsehoods later without apparent damage to his career. In 1751 he was elected to represent Northampton in the Massachusetts assembly. After 1760 he represented Hampshire County for 20 years in the General Court. Timothy Dwight, who grew up in Northampton during that period, said of Hawley: "Many men have spoken with more elegance and grace--I never heard one speak with more force."[19] Joseph married Mercy Lyman, daughter of a prominent family, in 1752.

Hawley's biographer characterized his career as "a steady struggle against clerical infallibility and church interference in civil affairs."[20] As the Commonwealth's chief anti-cleric, Hawley vigorously opposed the continued support of religious institutions through taxation contained in Article III of the new Massachusetts Constitution. Advocating the Virginia solution of total religious disestablishment, Hawley "denied that the people had a right to require the towns to support and maintain public worship and protestant teachers of religion."[21] Believing that his conscience was for him and him alone to evaluate, he retired from public life in 1779 after refusing to take the oath of religious belief required for state Senators under the new Constitution. Explaining his position to fellow Senators, he struck a personal note amid his generally principled stand, saying:

> I have been a professed Christian nearly 40 years and altho' I have been guilty of many things unworthy of that character whereof I am ashamed; yet I am not conscious that I have been guilty of anything wholly inconsistent with truth of that profession.[22]

This powerful political and secular leader died childless, as did his brother Elisha, who fell in battle at Crown Point in 1755. Their secular heritage of private interest lived on, however, and was embodied in the basic principles of individualism and competing interest groups that characterized the Jacksonian period of American history.

A parallel religious heritage that frequently represented community interests and collective values also achieved a new level of expression in the 1830's. In the religious revivals that swept town and countryside in that decade, this heritage provided women with powerful means of assaulting traditional gender inequalities, as exemplified by the activities of the American Female Moral Reform Society and their crusade to end prostitution and to assert a single standard of sexual morality.[23]

A century earlier this religious heritage was revitalized by the "Great Awakening" of the 1730's and 1740's, which transferred a new degree of religious power to the laity through revival techniques that put a premium on popular response to charismatic preaching. This transfer of power from the church hierarchy to religious laity was completed and confirmed by the more extensive "Second Great Awakening," which waxed and waned between 1798 and 1857, reaching its fullest expression in the 1830's. This transfer of power, which had enormous implications for the participation of women in public life, originated in the 1740's, where its effects on women were much less visible.

In some communities the revival and its effects were shortlived. This was the case in Northampton, although Jonathan Edwards, pastor of the First Church between 1729 and 1750, is usually seen as the single most important religious thinker and innovator in the "Great Awakening," as well as a major figure in American Enlightenment thought.[24] Nevertheless Edwards was dismissed by his congregation in 1750, for while his preaching created religious ecstasy among his listeners, his exhalted view of ministerial power and authority bordered on arrogance and brought him into a multitude of conflicts with his parishioners. While the effects of the "Great Awakening" were shortlived in the town where it began, they were more long-lasting in other communities. In many the revival led to the growth of new churches and dissenting sects, such as Baptists, in which the laity held increased power. Such religious pluralism fostered competition among churches for members, and in some communities such competition could contribute to the erosion of traditional gender inequalities.

Such was not the case in Northampton, however, where various constituencies in the congregation grew increasingly alienated from their minister during the 1740's, and combined to dismiss him in 1750, reinstating traditional patterns of religious authority thereafter.[25]

The Council's rebuff of Edwards' innovative defense of Martha's claim to Elisha's name was thoroughly enmeshed in the politics of his dismissal. For our purposes the most significant dimension of that politics lay in the lineage rivalry that existed between Jonathan Edwards and Joseph Hawley. This rivalry probably intensified the commitment each of these male charismatic leaders had to winning this fornication case. Regardless of its unique dimensions, the rivalry probably typifies an important dimension of eighteenth-century female experience in New England: the championship or opposition to female interests in the public domain by men whose stance was affected by other considerations beyond those related to women.

Edwards and Hawley were first cousins, both grandsons of Solomon Stoddard, both first-born sons of Stoddard daughters.[26] Both were competing for the inheritance of their grandfather's legacy of local leadership. Hawley held the advantage of native birth and sizeable wealth. Edwards held the advantage of occupying Stoddard's pulpit and carrying forward the revivalist innovations begun by his grandfather. Edwards was raised in the company of 10 sisters and no brothers, by a mother renowned for her piety and good works and by a father known for his obstinancy when it came to sharing power with his congregation. Hawley and his only sibling Elisha were raised by their widowed mother Rebekah, after their father committed suicide in 1734 when they were 11 and 8 years old. Their father cut his throat after sinking into a depression during his nephew's first revival success in his father-in-law's pulpit.

Edwards attributed his uncle's suicide to the work of the devil and to bad blood inherited from Hawley's mother, writing cooly in his Narrative of Surprising Conversions, published in 1736:

> In the later part of May, it began to be very sensible that the spirit of God was gradually drawing from us, and after this time Satan seemed to be more let loose, and raged in a dreadful manner. The first instance, wherein it appeared, was a person's putting an end to his own life, by cutting his throat. He was a gentleman of more than common understanding, of strict morals, religious in his behavior, and an useful, honorable person in the town; but was of a family that are exceeding prone to the disease of melancholy, and his mother was killed with it.[27]

This suicide doubtlessly quickened the lineage rivalry between Edwards and the fatherless Joseph. The open expression of this rivalry was finally made possible in 1748, by the death of the most important intermediary between them -- Colonel John Stoddard, their uncle, Rebekah's brother, who had been the town's most important political figure. John Stoddard died one month after Martha's civil settlement with Elisha, leaving a legacy of political leadership that Joseph was quick to claim as his own. The ultimate confrontation of this rivalry was at another Council of Ministers convened in June 1750 to determine whether the First Church should be allowed to dismiss Jonathan Edwards as pastor. There Joseph Hawley was the congregation's chief spokesman against Edwards, and later admitted that he made:

> groundless, and slanderous imputations on Mr. Edwards, expressed in bitter language... which I could never have done if I had not had a wicked relish for perverse things: which conduct of mine I confess very sinful, and highly provoking to God; for which I am ashamed, confounded, and have nothing to answer.[28]

Edwards believed that Hawley "Not only helped the People gain their End in dismissing me, but much encouraged and promoted the spirit with which it was done."[29]

Hawley's apology to Martha was written six weeks after his "slanderous imputations" against Edwards. Perhaps his father's melancholoy example prompted Joseph to be cautious with his own conscience and unload the burden of Martha Root while he was adjusting to the burden of Jonathan Edwards. This way he avoided his father's total solution.

This fornication case therefore involved larger struggles than that between Martha and Elisha or that between the First Church and the Hawley family. Although the normal processes of community coercion with regard to premarital pregnancy might have resulted in Elisha's excommunication by the church, Edwards' vigorous and innovative presentation of the issues at the church Council and Joseph's false testimony might have been due to their multiple interests in the case.

In addition to his desire to win this first open test of his power against Joseph Hawley, Edwards might have been influenced by the fact that he was on intimate terms with Martha's family, since her sister Hannah was frequently employed to care for the minister's

seven daughters and two sons. On June 22nd of 1748, for example, when Sarah Edwards was in Boston attending the deathbed of John Stoddard (who became fatally ill in Boston), Edwards wrote his wife about their household in her absence: "Your two eldest daughters went to Bed last night, both sick....We got Hannah Root to help them yesterday in the afternoon, expect her again today."[30] Edwards' personal connection with the Root family meant that he was probably well-informed of Martha's situation and her civil settlement.

Martha Root occupied a culturally anomalous position from which two charismatic male leaders were trying to remove her; Edwards in the name of "human society in general," to the culturally normative ranks of the married; Hawley in defense of his family's interests, to the ranks of the culturally and sexually deviant. Hawley's view prevailed and the council gave a negative answer to the question of whether it was Elisha's duty to marry Martha.

Although private conscience, as dictated by private interest, won the day in the religious as well as the civil arena, the religious arena offered significant opposition to private interest. Although the decisions in each arena embodied inequalities of both class and gender, the terms of the debate differed in each. The civil settlement was more explicit about class inequalities between the parties, and only hinted at the presence of gender inequalities. Religious proceedings were more explicit about gender inequalities that valued chastity in women more than in men, and only hinted at the presence of class inequalities between the two parties.

This particular conflict shows the willingness of the church and its minister to override traditional gender equalities not "Merely that justice be done to the woman," but for "the order, decency and health of human society in general." This conflict between social structure and cultural values suggests that one elite family enjoyed an unusual amount of cultural power in this community. If temporarily rejected at the local level, its interests were sustained at the appellate or county level of the church council. Elite families did not exercise this degree of cultural power in all New England communities, however. In others "middling" families held more power and the interests of average women were more effectively sustained by the church.

Through this fornication case and other occasions of social conflict involving women, I believe I can show a sustained relationship in Northampton between the cultural hegemony of elite families and the failure of local institutions to advance the interests of average women. Detached from this larger context this case shows the relative ability of one church congregation and its minister to advance the interests of one average woman, and the relative ability of one elite family to oppose their efforts.

Since Martha Root's private papers were not preserved, our view of her case is limited to that of the two powerful men who were involved in it. It is impossible to know what if any, satisfaction she took in Joseph Hawley's apology. If its cautious wording denoted that it was written in response to community coercion, Hawley might have promised the apology orally before she received it in written form. In that case she would not have been surprised upon its arrival. Perhaps the document was deemed important by her parents in clearing her reputation for future betrothal. Unfortunately it is not possible to trace the future of Martha Root's child or to know whether Rebekah Hawley's lineage survived genetically in spite of its legal termination with her childless sons.

Notes

1. Letters and Papers of Major Joseph Hawley, Ms. 2 Vols., New York Public Library, Vol. I, 7, May 17, 1748, (civil agreement); and I, 8, Report of Council of Ministers, June 29, 1749. Microfilm, Forbes Library, Northampton.

2. Ibid., I, 8.

3. Joseph Hawley to Elisha Hawley, Feb. 16, 1748. Ibid., I, 6.

4. Northampton Vital Records, Ms. Town Clerk's Office; James Russell Trumbull, History of Northampton, Massachusetts from its Settlement in 1654, 2 Vols. (Northampton: Press of Gazette Printing Co., 1902). Unpublished Vol. 3 of Northampton Genealogies 1640-1838, Forbes Library Reel 21, Northampton; Northampton Town Papers, 5.71 Tax Assessors, Tax valuation lists, 1739-1781, Microfilm, Forbes Library, Reel 146; and personal communication with Patricia Tracy and Tiziana Rota.

5. George E. Howard, A History of Matrimonial Institution 2 Vols. (Chicago, 1904), II, p. 193, counted illegitimacy cases from the court records of Middlesex County, Massachusetts, in 1764. Using his figures, Daniel Scott Smith, in "A Survey of Illegitimacy and Premarital Pregnancy in American History" (Unpublished paper prepared for forthcoming volume on historical studies of illegitimacy, edited by Peter Laslett and Karla Oosterveen, August 1975) table 5, p. 32, estimated a rate of 4.6-5.6 illegitimate births per 1,000 unmarried women, aged 15-44.

6. Daniel Scott Smith and Michael S. Hindus, "Premarital Pregnancy in America 1640-1971: An Overview and Interpretation," Journal of Interdisciplinary History V (Spring 1975), Figure 1, p. 538, and p. 544.

7. J.H. to E.H., December 23, 1748, Hawley Papers, I, 12.

8. Trumbull, op. cit., pp. 79-80.

9. Northampton Tax Valuation list, 1739, op. cit.

10. See David D. Hall, The Faithful Shepherd: A History of the New England Ministry in the Seventeenth Century (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1972), pp. 133-136 for church discipline and church-state relations inherited by the 18th century.

11. J.H. to E.H., December 23, 1748, op. cit.

12. Three Martha Roots and Elisha and Joseph Hawley are listed as church members between 1729 and 1744 in Rev. Solomon Clark, Historical Catalogue of the Northampton First Church, 1661-1891 (Northampton: Gazette Printing Co., 1891), pp. 42, 61, 62.

13. The Cambridge Platform, (Evans microfilm) Chapter X, p. 14, paragraph 11: "Power of judgement in matters of Censor...remaineth with the Brotherhood."

14. S. E. Dwight, The Life of President Edwards (New York: G. & C. & H. Carvill, 1830) p. 298.

15. E. Francis Brown, Joseph Hawley, Colonial Radical (New York: Columbia University Press, 1931), p. 98.

16. Jonathan Edwards Papers, Folder "no date" #1, item 11, Andover Newton Theological School, Newton Centre, Massachusetts.

17. Edwards Papers, folder "no date" #2, item 15.

18. J.H. to Martha Root, August 8, 1750 Hawley Papers, I. 9.

19. Timothy Dwight, Travels in New England and New York, 4 Vols. (London, 1823), I. p. 300, quoted in Brown, Hawley, p. 49.

20. Brown, Hawley p. 180.

21. For a complete discussion of Hawley's views, see Mary C. Clune, "Joseph Hawley's Criticism of the Constitution of Massachusetts," Smith College Studies in History, III. (October 1917), pp. 32-49. Quotation from William G. McLoughlin, New England Dissent, 1630-1833, the Baptists and the Separation of Church and State, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971) 2 Vols, I, 607-8.

22. Hawley to Mass. Senate, Oct. 28, 1780 quoted in Brown, Hawley p. 183.

23. See Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "Beauty, the Beast and the Militant Woman: A Case Study in Sex Roles and Social Stress in Jacksonian America," American Quarterly 23 (1971): 562-84.

24. For the single best biography of Jonathan Edwards, see Ola Elizabeth Winslow, Jonathan Edwards, 1703-1758 (N.Y.: Collier Books 1961).

25. Trumbull, pp. 226-241. He indicates that no new churches were formed in Northampton until 1822.

26. See Dwight. pp. 661-64 and 762-63 for Stoddard and Edwards genealogies.

27. Quoted in Brown, Hawley, p. 10.

28. Joseph Hawley to Rev. Mr. Hall of Sutton, Northampton, May 9, 1760, quoted in Dwight, Edwards, p. 423-24.

29. Jonathan Edwards to Joseph Hawley Stockbridge, Nov. 18, 1754, in Clarence H. Faust and Thomas H. Johnson, Joanthan Edwards, Representative Selections, (N.Y.: Hill and Wang, 1962), p. 397.

30. Jonathan Edwards to Mrs. Sarah Edwards, Northampton, June 22, 1748, in ibid., p. 384.

American Needlework in Transition, 1880-1930[1]

Rachel Maines

Between 1880 and 1930, the needle arts in the United States showed a remarkable development that was both aesthetic and economic, resulting in dramatic changes in and additions to traditional nineteenth century style and technique. New materials for needlework and improvements on familiar threads and yarns were introduced at attractive prices to consumers whose needlework education included not only instruction by their mothers and perhaps formal schooling, but an increasingly sophisticated needlework press that made the finest designs available to millions of women. This expansion of the needlework press and of the notions and fancy goods trade, unequalled until the needlework resurgence of the present day, arose from a variety of interdependent social, economic and technological conditions in which later changes eventually precipitated a decline at the onset of the Depression.

Historical treatments of the needle arts generally deal with the efforts of either leisure-class or professional needleworkers in the media of embroidery and lace, or with the primarily rural evolution of quilts and coverlets. These aspects of needlework history, adequately treated elsewhere, are only marginally significant to the present study, which concerns the domestic needlework of middle and working class women, especially in the industrial Northeast. Needlework, for the purposes of this study, includes all branches of embroidery, beadwork, crochet, knitting, the needle-made, net-made and bobbin laces, macrame, patchwork, applique and quilting. Readers not familiar with the technical language of needlework are advised to consult Dillmont's Encyclopedia of Needlework,[2] since defining the many terms included here would require an extensive glossary.

Working class needlework is seldom dealt with in textile historical writing, as it is of little value to collectors; consequently few scholars have directed their attention to the five decades crossing the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, in which working class needlework flourished. The lack of historical enthusiasm for American work since 1870 is epitomized by historian Martha Genung Stearns who, writing in 1963, states flatly that "... the last seventy-five years have contributed almost nothing, nationally speaking, to American needlework."[3]

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One problem to historians like Stearns is the extent to which needlework became commercialized at the end of the nineteenth century. Under the combined sponsorship of the needlework press and the thread and yarn companies, the needlework media were systematically explored and presented to the public by the most effective means then available: well designed patterns, imaginative marketing, and superior materials at popular prices. Magazines, design firms and thread companies offered patterns through the mail and in local retail outlets, which stimulated the purchase of needlework materials. Designs that were attractive and challenging made excellent advertising for the threads and yarns required to make up the work, so thread companies published their own patterns for work that called for their own line of notions products. They introduced a great variety of new techniques by hiring professional designers, many of whom were also employed by the needlework press, and by applying ethnic styles and methods to American materials. The influence of notions and thread manufacturers was also felt in their significant subsidy of needlework publishing through advertising in magazines and publications other than their own. Thus, the economic interests of both manufacturers and publishers became an important factor in needlework design at the end of the nineteenth century.

Changes in Needlework Style

Embroidery moved away from the craze for canvaswork in Berlin wools that had dominated the second and third quarters of the nineteenth century, although some magazines still featured canvaswork charts until well into the nineties. Other counted work, however, thrived throughout this period, especially ethnic embroidery styles and methods derived from them. Charts, sometimes in color, for cross-stitch and beadwork were published by private design firms as well as magazines. Alphabets for marking linens were a frequent feature in published sources for charts. Most of the small charted-work pattern businesses were woman-owned, and sold cross-stitch and other specialized counted work materials through the mail, in addition to the designs. Counted thread embroidery techniques from Europe became quite popular, particularly Scandinavian hardanger embroidery, Swedish huck work and ethnic designs from Roumania, the Ukraine, Dalmatia, Yugoslavia, Russia and Italy. New technical ideas were introduced as well, such as counted work on crocheted filet, and the method called "silk mosaic" put out by the Richardson Silk Company.

Closely related to counted thread embroidery are the openwork embroidery techniques often mistakenly called laces: pulled work, punched work, cutwork and drawnwork. These media show even greater ethnic influences than counted embroidery, borrowing form and fashion from Italian hemstitching, Mexican drawnwork, Danish hedebo, Madeira embroidery, French eyelet work, Colado Phillipine punchwork and broderie anglaise. These techniques were prominently identified as to their ethnicity not only when they were taken directly from foreign sources, but when reinterpreted by American designers.

Whitework, by itself and in combination with other needlework media, was widely used for clothing embellishment, especially the lingerie, shirtwaists and dresses that reached the height of their popularity between 1900 and 1919. Whitework doilies and linen monogramming in white-on-white embroidery, particularly with padding, appeared frequently in the magazines. British Mountmellick work, French, Italian and Wallachian whitework embroideries were widely published, copied and interpreted by needlewomen.

Candace Wheeler, the New York embroiderer who engineered the magnificent displays of international needlework at the Columbian Exposition of 1893, made heroic efforts to establish European guild standards for American embroidery, especially silk work, through the Society for Decorative Art and the Associated Artists, but it is doubtful whether her work had much effect on working and middle class needlework. Silk did prosper during this period, however, due to the tireless ingenuity of American silk thread manufacturers in finding new ways to sell their wares by producing lavishly colored floral designs that were both botanically exact and extremely thread-intensive. The silk companies were responsible for the almost universal acceptance of Art Nouveau as an embroidery style, publishing many attractive Art Nouveau needlework designs for clothing and furnishings. Other types of surface embroidery were a regular feature of needlework magazines and thread company publications, but surface work did not receive the intensely creative attention devoted to silk embroidery, crochet, and lace during the same period.

Some of the most beautiful and graceful work ever done in American crochet was produced during this period when silk, linen, wool and cotton thread and yarn manufacturers competed for the time, energies and money of crocheters. At the end of the nineteenth century, crochet had passed through a state of arrested development, focusing on the repetitive Victorian gewgaws pictured in Godey's, Leslie's and Peterson

magazines, while most innovative design efforts were directed toward embroidery. With the new influx of industrial money to the field, crochet became a major force in the American needle arts. While wool yarn manufacturers like Columbia concentrated on designs for afghans and garments such as gloves, sweaters and shawls, the cotton, linen and silk thread companies financed extravagant and exciting publications by talented designers to reveal the apparently endless possibilities of crochet for lacemaking. Borrowing heavily from European sources, magazines and pamphlets featured Irish crochet, spiderwork, "Russian" crochet, Venetian lace, torchon and reticella for crochet, simulated Armenian lace, and the Cluny crochet that had its origins earlier in the nineteenth century. Irish crochet became a national fad, adapted for every purpose by the popular designers. Edgings, doilies and insertions in crochet were among the most frequent applications, but this period also saw a number of new combinations of crochet with other media. Designers used crochet in conjunction with drawnwork, tatting, hedebo, hardanger, counted embroidery, as applique motifs and combined with various kinds of novelty braid such as rickrack and coronation braid.

Tatting was also considered an important means of selling thread, especially cotton, resulting in publicity and corresponding popularity that lasted well into the thirties. The elegance and artistic achievement of American tatting during this time rivals the work of Europe where the art form originated. Needle-made lace, netting and bobbin lace were minor influences on the American needlework scene in this era, with most new ideas coming from ethnic work such as Armenian needlepoint lace.

Nineteenth century knitting had been confined largely to its uses for plain work, the making of garments, accessories and domestic items in silk and wool for practical reasons. It was not until the turn of the century that knitted laces and elaborate fancywork knitting came into vogue. Here too the designers, thread companies and magazines were largely responsible for the change, presenting new stitches, adaptations of purpose and novelty yarns in cotton and linen as well as wool and silk. Beadwork knitting, and knitting in combination with other kinds of work, such as crochet or embroidery, were among the older techniques developed for new applications.

During the World War, the time-honored custom of knitting clothing and other necessities for the poor

was extended to Red Cross work, both for the outfitting of refugees and for American soldiers abroad. Eleemosynary knitting was a regular column in several needlework magazines, especially those written for the middle and working classes. The utilitarian nature of these knitted articles, which were primarily woolens, was in sharp contrast to the dainty, luxurious laces in linen, silk and cotton for lingerie and domestic linens pictured in the same magazines.

The lace traditions of Europe accompanied the many immigrant groups then arriving in the United States, and some found their way into the needlework press. In addition to Armenian lace which often appeared under the by-line of an Armenian designer, teneriffe and the closely-related Mexican drawnwork and Puerto Rican laces were common media for doilies and table coverings. The national enthusiasm for Battenberg, royal Battenberg and honiton reached the proportions of a fad, contributing significantly to the sales of thread and braid manufactured for lacemaking. During the twenties and early thirties, interest in Battenberg waned despite efforts to revive it.[4] Italian needle-made filet appeared in the magazines from time to time, usually charted for pictorial work. Needle laces were so frequently combined with openwork embroidery that in 1929 and 1931 the Singer Sewing Machine Company published instructions for making dozens of varieties of lace and openwork on their standard home sewing machine, accompanied by photographs of exquisite designs the mechanical construction of which strains credibility.[5]

Few of the great needlework designers devoted their effort to quiltmaking until after the beginning of the Depression, following an already established and historically intriguing trend of increased interest in quiltmaking during periods of economic adversity.[6] Of the fifty-year gap in quilt development Ruth Finley, one of the first quilt scholars, writes in 1929 that "... no well-known [quilt] pattern was evolved after 1880..."[7]

Changes in industry during the first eight decades of the nineteenth century had laid the groundwork for the needlework boom that changed the spirit of American needle arts after 1880. Cotton sewing thread, invented early in the century, began to be produced industrially after the invention of the sewing machine in mid-century, which required a smooth-running hard twist thread. Silk, spun from imported fiber, was plentiful and relatively profitable to manufacture. Wool yarn, while still produced mostly

for local sale, saw the beginning of national marketing during the eighteen-seventies. The advertising that supported new magazines at popular subscription prices was also based on the then-new concept of national product identification. Mass production necessitated increasing consumer demand through advertising, for which few media except magazines existed. Better postal communication helped both magazine sales and businesses selling needlework materials and kits by mail order.

The development of new form and technique in nearly all the needle arts except quiltmaking between 1880 and 1930 resulted in part from the increased number of inexpensive magazines available to all classes of needlewomen, and the private and corporate publication of designs in easily accessible form. Consumer-oriented companies, including manufacturers of needlework materials, and advertising in the popular press, made it possible to offer and distribute serial publications at prices within the range of working class families. Refinements in mass production methods had reduced thread and yarn prices in relation to wages, and competition among producers of these goods contributed to quality improvements in texture, twist and dye fastness, as well as speed of production.

The economic availability of thread, yarn and notions to a greater number of consumers, and the increased demand for needlework materials generated by advertising and published pattern sources created opportunities for retail businesses, expecially in less affluent areas in which yarn and thread were finding new markets. Three aspects of the needlework trade increased production and sales by the manufacturers; magazine and pattern circulation, and the numbers of small local retailers selling notions and fancy goods. Women were involved at all stages of thread and yarn manufacture and sale. Thread mill operatives were about seventy-five percent women,[8] needlework magazines and design firms employed women almost exclusively, and women owned and operated many of the small businesses at the retailing end. Their customers were also, of course, nearly all female, so the prosperity of the notions industry depended on the ability and willingness of American women to spend their own or family money on sewing and needlework supplies. The economic prosperity of the industrial Northeast, with thousands of women employed at factory work and in

retailing, may have contributed to the thriving business picture for needlework during this period. The possible connection between the employment of women and needlework sales is treated more fully below.

Change in the Needlework Press

The needlework press of the Victorian era was, in contrast to later publications, priced out of the reach of most working class needlewomen. Godey's, the prototype for later generations of women's magazines, offered subscriptions for three dollars a year, then a considerable amount of money. Arthur's was somewhat less expensive at two dollars and a quarter annually. Subscription rates in this bracket represented more than the contents of most working people's weekly pay envelopes, and consequently were directed to women of comfortable means, and groups who could pool their resources to buy magazines. Advertising revenues made it possible for later publications to present quality material at much lower rates. Needlecraft, a monthly newspaper published between 1909 and 1935, was fifty cents a year or five cents a single copy, the same price as a single spool of cotton sewing thread at the same period. The Star Needlework Journal, published by the American Thread Company between 1916 and 1925, sold for forty cents a year or ten cents a copy. Both magazines were profusely illustrated and regularly featured the work of important designers. The Home Needlework Magazine, put out by Nonotuck Silk under the flimsy disguise of the Florence Publishing Company, contained lovely and numerous color plates every other month for thirty-five cents annually or ten cents a single copy.

In addition to magazines published solely for the needlework community, the women's press of the period included needlework departments, many of which were of consistently high design quality and innovative in approach. Godey's, Leslie's, Arthur's and Peterson magazines, the major women's publications of the Victorian era, combined a few pages of patterns for embroidery, knitting and crochet with fashion, fiction, news, poetry, biography and book reviews. This format was followed by later magazines such as the Woman's Home Companion and Modern Priscilla, but the needlework and handcraft departments were greatly expanded and included more detailed instructions.

Designers' names began to appear frequently with their patterns. Most of the work shown in nineteenth century magazines was fancywork, especially wardrobe accessories and household knicknacks, as if the editors assumed readers would not require instruction in such plainwork basics as socks and petticoats. By the turn of the twentieth century, however, patterns and explicit directions for functional everyday needlework, including home sewing, tailoring and millinery, were a major inclusion in the popularly-priced needlework publications.

Some of the needlework press and women's magazines were noticeably pro-woman in their outlook. Sarah Josepha Hale, editor of Godey's until the end of the eighteen-seventies, had set a precedent for this in her strong support for the education and employment of women. Some magazines after her time, such as Plain and Fancy Needlework, the Star Needlework Journal, and the Lace Maker, did not editorialize on the events and issues of the times but provided needlewomen and homemakers with affirmation of the essential value of their roles, in much the same way that Catherine Beecher attempted to elevate the status of woman's "sphere." Others, particularly Needlecraft and the Woman's Home Companion, were outspoken in their views on women's issues, although none could be considered radical. Needlecraft was clearly a working class needlewoman's publication, with editorial-page articles in every issue on the prospects and possibilities of earning money with needlework. The more expensive Modern Priscilla (two dollars a year and twenty cents a single copy in 1923), with which Needlecraft shared some staff for part of the careers of both magazines, seldom deals with issues of financial hardship, and geared its advertising to more affluent homes. Needlecraft called itself "our paper," and took considerable pride in its interactions with readers. While supplementing family income with work done at home received the most editorial attention, work outside the home was also encouraged, especially during and after the war. In 1920, Needlecraft's editor, Margaret Barton Manning urges her employed readers to "Put your heart into the work you have to do. Make it your first interest."[9] Having one's own money to spend as an alternative to the "bread of dependence" was also the subject of Needlecraft editorials.[10] This magazine even anticipated the current wave of interest in needlework done by men by announcing its plans in 1916 to publish a "Man's Number" of the magazine.[11]

Table 1: Runs of Publication of Ten Needlework and Women's Magazines

Magazine Title	Commenced	Ceased
Godey's	1830	1898
Home Needlework Magazine	1899	1917
The Lace Maker	1903	1912
Ladies' Home Journal	1883	---
Leslie's	1855	1922
Modern Priscilla	1887	1930
Needlecraft	1909	1935
Peterson Magazine	1842	1898
Star Needlework Journal	1916	1925
Woman's Home Companion	1873	1957

The Woman's Home Companion was also supportive of women's efforts to earn money for themselves and their families, and was an advocate of increased educational opportunities for women. The August 1908 issue includes a pro-suffrage editorial, and the rights of working women are frequently discussed in editorial and feature pages. Anna S. Richardson wrote a column for the Companion called "For the Girl Who Earns Her Own Living." This progressive attitude toward the economics of women's role is also evident in the Companion's supplementary publications.[12] Although the Companion's needlework pages were dominated by dressmaking and millinery, fancywork nonetheless appears in every issue.

Although all the magazines at this time showed ethnic needlework patterns, Priscilla and Needlecraft were unusual in that they took editorial positions on the value of ethnic contributions to American needlework and American culture. This may have been the influence of the popular designers E. Marion Stevens, Amy V. Richards, Flora Deuschle and Emma Boardman, who were among those employed on the staffs of both magazines. Priscilla in 1923 suggests that its readers make a point of befriending immigrants;[13] Needlecraft, among frequent mentions of immigration and its results during the war years and later, published an article by needleworker and charity organizer Florence Yoder Wilson, who stresses the importance of ethnicity to American needlework. Writing in 1932 in a special issue on the Ukraine, Wilson

says, "Instead of talking about assimilating the foreigner, we should be taking steps to assimilate what he [sic] brings us,"[14] which is in fact what American needlewomen were doing through ethnic designs made available to them through popular publications.

The designers who worked for needlework magazines and in the handcraft departments of the women's press were in many cases highly skilled artists and draftswomen with formal education in the needle arts. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, schools for young women had taught increasingly sophisticated courses of instruction in needlework, resulting in a high level of competence in execution as well as some familiarity with design. Combined with the later influence of greatly expanded higher educational programs for women, needlework and textile design became acceptable professional options for needlewomen. The two largest employers of needlework designers were, of course, the needlework press and the thread companies, but needlework patterns were also designed for use in advertising for other businesses such as patent medicine and variety stores.[15] Some designers were self-employed, publishing and distributing their own work; others worked for small mail-order and wholesale pattern design firms such as the St. Louis Fancy Work Company or E. C. Spuehler. Many of the well-known designers worked for more than one company or magazine simultaneously, even publishing under the imprint of competing thread companies. The needlewomen who bought and used professionally designed commercial patterns often developed an allegiance to one or more designers whose taste and approach to technique most nearly matched their own. The work of the most influential designers is still much sought after by older needleworkers who became familiar with the names of the great designers in their youth.

The thread companies which published their own magazines often shared editorial staff and contributors with the private needlework press. Needlecraft's Elsa Barsaloux and Lilian Barton Wilson, and Priscilla's Belle Robinson all designed for the Nonotuck Silk Company's Home Needlework Magazine. The Star Needlework Journal of the American Thread Company employed a staff of its own but also solicited patterns from readers through prize contests for designs using their products, a device also employed by Barbour Flax Thread.

In addition to magazines, the companies produced and distributed small pattern books, often expensively illustrated, that retailed for ten cents in the same stores that sold needlework materials. Many of these pamphlets featured the company's current star designer. Although the pattern booklets were essentially advertising material designed to sell thread, they were themselves advertised in needlework and women's magazines, usually displaying the designers' names prominently. The success of needlework pattern pamphlets may be judged by the marketing investment made in promoting them: full-page advertisements, some of them in color and sometimes more than one in a single issue of a magazine. Anne Orr's work for J. & P. Coats was publicized in this way, as was that of her predecessor at Coats, Frances Harris, who latter appears in advertising for Margrace Mills. The thread manufacturers traded on the reputations of their designers, and made use of the artists' magazine publicity and connections to reach the needlework community.

The Thread Companies and Needlework

In the eighteen-eighties, the relationship among manufacturers, magazines and designers was still young, and selling thread through design publication was considered novel. Belding Brothers published an instruction booklet in 1883 that was regarded as experimental, in which the company states that the directions are "... prepared by Miss Van Dyck, who has been for some years a teacher of the art ..."[16] Nonotuck Silk, then a strong competitor of Belding, had distributed a handbook in the previous year with a similarly vague reference to the designer: "These rules have all been prepared by a person of large experience, employed solely by us for this work, whose designs have been specially engraved for this edition by the most competent artist."[17] From these modest beginnings the thread industry expanded and developed the design marketing technique which became the major advertising approach for handcraft thread and yarn until the renaissance of embroidery at the end of the nineteen-sixties.

Because this fragile union between the aesthetic and economic factions of needlework depended on the continuing support of thread manufacturers, it was sensitive to upward and downward trends in the notions and home sewing industry, and in industrial textiles generally. Since the purchasers of notions products were and are almost exclusively women, the fortunes of the industry at both the manufacturing and retail levels

were closely linked to the expendable personal and family income of American women, and to their interest in spending it on needlework materials. Consequently, the advancement of design in the needlework press required a continued flow of money from women's income into the purchase of thread and yarn, which in turn financed expanded production and increased advertising for which excellence of design was a necessity. The prosperity of the industry at this point in history attracted new ventures, so the competitive nature of thread advertising also upgraded design quality as manufacturers sought out the best work in order to sell thread.

Thread and notions manufacture plays a comparatively small role in the economics of textile production. In addition to the many different cord numbers, twists, finishes and putups of sewing and handcraft thread, most mills produced other textile products not immediately related to domestic needlework, such as ribbons, tailor's silk and other items for the apparel industry, in which the market fluctuates with that of the textile industry as a whole. In spite of their rather modest contribution to total textile production, two thread manufacturers, Belding Brothers and American Thread, gained so much prestige during this period that they were listed in Dockham's Trade Reports for 1891-92 among the fifty or so "leading corporations in New England."[18] The business patterns of the notions industry paralleled the rapid rise of needlework publishing both in manufacturing and in retail trade, thriving throughout the first twenty-five years of this century.

The silk companies imported raw silk fiber from the Orient to throw, spin, twist, weave and dye into the variety of silk products used in both industrial and domestic sewing and needlework. Novelty silk fabrics, threads, and yarns for fancywork had been available throughout the nineteenth century to those who could afford them, but after the opening of China's treaty ports and the subsequent growth of silk trade, silk thread prices dropped dramatically, making the medium accessible to larger numbers of women. Needlework materials of silk were cheaper than ever before or since. By way of comparison with modern prices, an embroidery silk sample card in 1901 showing several hundred shades in a large selection of twists and textures sold for twenty cents;[19] the equivalent today can cost as much as ten dollars.

The manufacture of silk threads, flosses and yarns for needlework was dominated by four firms: the Nonotuck Silk Company, later known as Corticelli, the Brainerd and Armstrong Company, Belding Brothers and Company, and the Richardson Silk Company, of whom all but Nonotuck were founded in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Nonotuck produced hosiery, mittens, underwear and silk yard goods in addition to sewing, embroidery and knitting silk in two plants in Florence and Leeds, Massachusetts. For a number of years they published the Home Needlework Magazine in which the principal attractions were patterns for lifelike embroidered flowers in stitch techniques borrowed from Chinese silk embroidery, requiring for their execution up to twenty different shades of silk floss. They also distributed separate handbooks and pattern books under the imprints of Corticelli Thread and the Florence Publishing Company. Their specialty was spun silk, made from the short silk fibers, and their printed literature propagandizes at great length on the advantages of their product over the more lustrous and sturdy thread silk of Belding Brothers, produced by throwing and twisting the long filaments of reeled silk.

Table 2: Operations of the Nonotuck Silk Company, 1880-1930

Nonotuck Silk Co.	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930
Capital $	120,000	720,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	2,000,000	***
Number of Employees	800	***	***	***	1,000	***

--- No activity during reporting year or cessation of thread operations.

*** Data not available for reporting year.

Source: Compiled from statistics reported in Dockham's Textile Manufacture and Dry Goods Trade and Directories, Davison's Textile Blue Book, and the American Textile Directory. Nonotuck did not provide active machinery figures to the reference sources, so they are not included in this table.

Brainerd and Armstrong was located at New London, Connecticut and Florence, Massachusetts, manufacturing needlework silks, tailor's silk and satins. Their series of Embroidery Lessons with Colored Studies is strikingly similar in approach and subject matter to Nonotuck's Home Needlework Magazine, including its preoccupation with botanical realism involving tremendous quantities of silk floss. The company offered in each issue an illustrated scientific explanation of the anatomy of flowers and even went so far as to say in several of its publications, "Modern embroidery concerns itself largely with the working of flowers at the present time," an aesthetic observation in which the element of economic self-interest is less than subtle. Regardless of motivation, both Nonotuck and Brainerd and Armstrong sponsored exceptional designs for floral work and Art Nouveau. In the mid-twenties, the two companies merged, with Brainerd and Armstrong becoming a part of Corticelli Silk.

Table 3: Operations of the Brainerd and Armstrong Company, 1880-1930

Brainerd and Armstrong Silk Company	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930
Spindleage in Operation	***	4,000	10,000	10,000	30,000	---
Capital $	***	320,000	640,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	---
Number of Employees	***	***	800	1,000	1,000	---

--- No activity during reporting years, or cessation of thread operations.

*** Data not available for reporting years.

Source: Dockham, Davison and the American Textile Directory.

The firm of Belding Brothers and Company was by 1920 the largest corporation manufacturing silk thread, with mills in Rockville, Connecticut, Northampton, Massachusetts, Petaluma, California, and Belding, Michigan. They made thread and yarns for crochet, knitting and embroidery as well as grosgrains, braid, satins, serges, sleeve linings, muscovites, surahs and ottoman

silk fabrics, and silk hosiery. In 1883, they claimed to be producing one hundred and fifty varieties of thread, nearly all from thread or filament silk. They made brief forays into the field of pattern publication and linen stamping but did not make these the focus of their advertising. Belding's leadership of the silk thread industry became even more significant when it absorbed its Belding, Michigan neighbor, the Richardson Silk Company, in 1920-21.

Table 4: Operations of Belding Brothers and Company, 1880-1930

Belding Brothers	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930
Spindleage in Operation	***	***	72,000	70,000	80,000	81,000
Capital $	***	1,000,000	1,000,000	3,000,000	5,500,500	***
Number of Employees	1,200	***	1,975	2,100	2,200	1,400

--- No activity during reporting years; or cessation of thread operations

*** Data not available for reporting years.

Source: Dockham, Davison and the American Textile Directory.

Richardson had also published a pamphlet series, some of which was distributed to a group of subscribers known as the Richardson Taka Embroidery Club, for which the company claimed a membership of seventeen thousand. Since members paid no dues, this claim may not have been exaggerated. Richardson also featured silk embroideries of flowers, in addition to books of crochet and counted thread embroideries by Needlecraft and Priscilla's Elsa Barsaloux. Richardson made sewing silk, machine twist, embroidery silk, and silk and mohair braid in the plant which became the Belding Brothers Richardson Mill. The combined Belding-Richardson enterprise went on to purchase Heminway Silk and later to join its former competitor Nonotuck as part of the Burlington Industries empire, still making thread under the Belding-Corticelli label.

Rayon and cotton imitations of silk threads and yarns were by 1909 already the subject of furious outcry in silk company publications. Competition from cotton companies and cellulosics was, however, only one factor among several contributing to the eventual decline in silk's importance as a needlework medium. Rising raw silk prices led to higher retail prices and smaller markets. The silk industry was adversely affected by the textile depression of 1925-26. As the most luxurious and costly material for needlework, it was the first to feel the effects of the shrinking budgets of American needlewomen as the general economic picture deteriorated.

Table 5: Operations of the Richardson Silk Company, 1880-1930

Richardson Silk	1800	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930
Spindleage in Operation	***	2,500	3,000	5,000	4,300	---
Capital $	***	100,000	200,000	400,000	***	---
Number of Employees	***	***	350	***	500	---

--- No activity in reporting years, or cessation of thread operations.

*** Data not available for reporting years.

Source: Dockham, Davison and the American Textile Directory.

Between 1890 and 1930, cotton thread manufacturers were as numerous as they were competitive, persistently striving to outdo each other in public estimation with the variety of their line, the staple length of their fiber, the purity and fastness of their colors, hardness and uniformity of twist, and even the quality of wood used in making the spools. As a result of the lengthy and occasionally poetic dissertations on these subjects that appeared with tedious regularity in thread company advertising material, including pattern books, the needlework public undoubtedly learned a great deal more about the manufacture of cotton handcraft thread than it really cared to know.

Hard-twist cotton thread was in the late Victorian era a relatively new product, invented in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, but not manufactured in quantity until after the appearance of the sewing machine in American homes after the Civil War. George C. Clark claims credit for the commercial development of cotton specialty threads in this country,[20] but it seems likely that a number of entrepreneurs entered the cotton thread trade for the same reasons in the last quarter of the century. Clark's Neward plants made spool cotton and yarns for needlework, domestic and industrial sewing. Clark's O.N.T. threads were advertised everywhere, and were the subject of scores of volumes of company-designed needlework patterns, especially crochet.

Table 6: Operations of Clark Mile-End Spool Cotton, 1880-1930

Clark Mile-End Spool Cotton	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930
Spindleage in Operation	27,000	66,000	273,000	26,000	351,002	326,428
Capital $	***	2,000,000	2,750,000	2,750,000	18,000,000	18,000,000
Number of Employees	***	***	2,150	***	4,000	***

--- No activity during reporting years, or cessation of thread operations.

*** Data not available for reporting years.

Source: Dockham, Davison and the American Textile Directory.

Pawtucket, Rhode Island was the center for much of the booming cotton thread industry at this time. The British firm of J. & P. Coats had opened a plant there in 1868 to manufacture spool cotton comparable in type and quality to Clark's, the company with which it was later to merge. Coats also promoted its products through designer patterns, sponsoring some of the finest advertising material ever introduced into the notions trade through its distributing agency, the Spool Cotton Company. Anne Orr and Frances Harris were only two of

many superb needle artists employed by the marketing division of J. & P. Coats. Then as now, Coats' publications stressed not only the aesthetic appeal of needlework made with its own threads and yarns, but the practical applications of plain work, millinery, dressmaking and tailoring for the family.

The American Thread Company opened in New Jersey in 1898 and is still in existence. From 1900 to 1930, they operated one of the largest corporations in the thread industry, with plants in Providence and Westerly, Rhode Island, Holyoke, Fall River and Roxbury, Massachusetts, Glasgo and Willimantic, Connecticut, and Milford, New Hampshire. Their system was so complex and statistics for individual mills so unevenly reported that it has not been possible to compile a table of their operations for the years in question. American Thread manufactured an impressive line of notions and needlework materials, along with several kinds of cotton warp for the industrial market. They distributed the now-famous Star Needlework Journal which ceased publication in 1925. The company continues to publish pattern booklets, but the scale of this enterprise was much reduced after the textile depression.

The wool yarns used for crochet and knitting were produced for the most part by small mills for local sale. Few of these companies advertised nationally and fewer still published designs for wool yarns. The one major exception was Columbia Yarn, an ongoing enterprise, that began to issue thick volumes of knitting and crochet patterns in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. They took pride in their unique position in the wool yarn industry, pointing out the advantages of a large national firm for ensuring uniform product quality and retail availability to consumers. Columbia's reliance on designer reputation was never as significant as it was in the silk and cotton thread industries,but they were responsible for considerable innovation in stitch technique and fancywork applications for wool yarns.

Linen needlework thread, now manufactured in the United States only in the form of commercial threads and embroidery floss, was until the first quarter of the nineteenth century a commonplace domestic sewing item. In fact, until the invention and refinement of cotton sewing thread, flax was the only readily available fiber capable of being spun finely and smoothly enough to be used in ordinary sewing. The less expensive cotton had so swiftly taken over the flax thread market that by 1880 the only major manufacturer of linen thread left in the United States was

the Paterson mill of Barbour Flax Spinning, an Irish firm making all kinds of linen products including thread for sewing, needlework, shoemaking, gloves, carpet, bookbinding and saddlery, seine thread, sail twine, nets, linen yarns, and embroidery floss in balls and skeins. Barbour published books and pamphlets on macrame lace making and counted thread embroidery on, of course, linen fabrics. The company maintains that it introduced macrame into the United States and even promoted its own "Patent Macrame Lace Desk," a specialized frame useful primarily for fringe-making.[21] Like American Thread, Barbour held contests for the best designs made from their own thread and published the results as judged by their staff designer, Mary E. Bradford. After the mid-twenties, Barbour dropped its needlework thread line and continued operations only in net, twine, cordage and other non-needlework related products.

Table 7: Operations of Barbour Flax Spinning, 1880-1930

Barbour Flax	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930
Spindleage in Operation	6,000	22,118	22,118	22,000	34,000	***
Capital $	150,000	750,000	750,000	750,000	1,000,000	***
Number of Employees	600	1,600	***	1,500	***	***

--- No activity in reporting year, or cessation of thread operations.

*** Data not available for reporting years.

Source: Dockham, Davison and the American Textile Directory.

Patterns of Retail Sales of Thread

A critical factor in the economic structure of needlework is the volume of retail sales, the nature of which determines which products can continue to be profitably offered to the public. Nearly all needlework supplies, tools and materials are small ticket items, retailing at this time in history for sums of money measured in pennies in order to be attractive to a portion of the population in command of very

limited financial resources, i.e., women. Volume of sales and usually some diversification into other kinds of goods or services were then essential to the small retailers, especially in low and middle income communities where individual purchases would rarely have totalled more than a dollar at a time. Needlework retail businesses between 1880 and 1930 were not the yarn and crafts stores familiar to needleworkers of the nineteen-seventies, but a small group of different kinds of enterprises in which needlework sales was a principal or supplementary activity. These included milliners, dressmakers and tailors, fancy and dry goods stores, and variety stores. After 1920, more of this trade began to be conducted in dry goods and variety stores, for a number of reasons, among them the rise of ready-to-wear clothing and the substantial drop in clothing prices that forced many dressmakers, tailors and milliners out of business.[22] Another possible contributing factor in the shift from sales by individual needleworkers such as dressmakers to variety stores and dry goods is that the latter retailers were more diversified in the kinds of goods they sold and therefore might have been better prepared to absorb short-term losses on their needlework trade. The change may also reflect a falling trend in the amount of money available to needlewomen to spend on their needlework, as dry goods and variety store prices for needlework materials are often lower than those of small businesses whose livelihoods depend on the sale of needlework materials and related services. That at least some of this was related to the very real contraction of the notions trade, as shown in Tables 2-7, can be ascertained by comparing manufacturing with retail activity for the same period. In considering the cutbacks that altered the thread industry after 1925, it should be noted that industrial sales of thread were down as well as domestic notions, a circumstance which further depressed the industry, but local retail sales are a vital concern to the existence of thread manufacturers.

Between 1920 and 1930, most thread companies reduced their advertising programs, and some went out of business altogether or ceased producing needlework thread. The inevitable result of this retrenchment was fewer needlework publications to serve as a communications medium for designers and needlewomen. Without the financial support of the notions industry and other consumer companies who were by 1929 also in economic straits, the needlework press dwindled to a

fraction of its growth by 1935, not to recover until the beginning of the crafts movement in the late nineteen-sixties.

Sales of Thread and Textile Prosperity: A Case Study

Textile manufacturing towns in New England employed a large number of women, and their needlework retailing patterns appear to show an upward and downward curve in the numbers of retail businesses in operation comparable to the rise and fall of employment in the mills.[23] This suggests that loss of income of some working and working class women was a contributing cause in the notions trade recession of the mid-twenties. Themselves or family members laid off either directly from mill employment or as a result of the local economic downturn, working class needlewomen would not have been able to afford the unnecessary purchase of needlework materials for purposes other than plain work. Thus a vital link in the economic support of the needlework industry would have been broken at the retail point.

Historians in fields other than needlework have frequently assumed that needlework is only engaged in by wealthy women with ample leisure, probably because they are the only group to receive any appreciable amount of attention in the historical literature. This is clearly a misperception. Working and middle class women have left more than adequate evidence of their enthusiasm for fancywork in their magazines, in the records of the business enterprises they supported, and in the popular literature by and about women, to say nothing of the great volume of family needlework produced during the 1880-1930 period still extant in working and middle class homes.

The retail patterns of Lowell, Lawrence, Pawtucket and Manchester were chosen for study because of the large percentage of women employed in the New England textile industry at that time, and because the women workers of textile manufacturing towns had always included needlework and sewing among their off-hours activities, embroidering, knitting, crocheting and netting when time and money permitted.[24] As the nineteenth century progressed, successive waves of immigration brought new groups to the industrial cities. The women of these immigrant groups brought with them needlework traditions of their own to become part of the emerging variety of American and ethnic fashions and techniques. Ethnic women in working class families were a significant force in the local economy of manufacturing towns, and they are especially important as consumers of needlework

Tables 8-11: Business Enterprises Engaged in the Retail and Local Wholesale Trade in Needlework Materials and Other Businesses

Four New England Textile Manufacturing Cities

Table 8: Lowell

Lowell, Mass.	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930
Population	17,476	64,107	84,367	106,294	112,759	110,296
Art Needlework and Embroidery	2	3	---	1	3	3
Dressmakers	135	249	285	199	167	98
Dry Goods	23	29	22	37	37	35
Fancy Goods	44	42	33	18	9	---
Millinery	27	30	35	59	40	25
Tailors and Merchant Tailors	20	32	42	55	99	52
Teachers of Embroidery	---	---	---	2	---	---
Variety Stores	69	102	126	163	153	128
Non-needlework Related Retail Industry						
Apothecaries and Druggists	34	54	53	62	45	45
Bakers	13	33	57	62	62	65
Booksellers and Stationers	15	17	16	12	10	10

Source: Compiled from statistics in Sampson and Murdock city directories for each city.

Table 9: Lawrence

Lawrence, Mass.	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930
Population	34,916	44,654	62,559	85,892	94,270	85,068
Art Needlework and Embroidery	---	---	---	2	4	3
Dressmakers	36	91	140	102	83	55
Dry Goods	20	18	34	48	76	64
Fancy Goods	28	19	23	12	4	1
Millinery	22	17	30	42	35	21
Tailors and Merchant Tailors	14	20	32	62	100	57
Variety Stores	24	65	106	97	83	76
Non-needlework Related Retail Industry						
Apothecaries and Druggists	22	29	32	44	40	44
Bakers	11	34	46	52	55	67
Booksellers and Stationers	6	13	18	7	8	9

Table 10: Pawtucket

Pawtucket, R.I.	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930
Population	19,030	27,633	39,231	51,622	64,248	77,149
Art Needlework and Embroidery	---	3	---	---	---	1
Dressmakers	108	182	234	236	169	68
Dry Goods	9	18	19	24	48	52
Fancy Goods	20	18	8	3	2	1
Millinery	14	17	23	34	40	23
Tailors and Merchant Tailors	17	24	33	53	65	55
Variety Stores	9	28	72	94	123	206
Non-needlework Related Retail Industry						
Apothecaries and Druggists	13	29	38	53	49	68
Bakers	99	19	25	23	31	56
Booksellers and Stationers	9	11	3	2	3	7

Table 11: Manchester

Manchester, N.H.	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930
Population	32,473	32,630	56,987	70,063	78,384	86,700
Art Needlework and Embroidery	---	2	1	---	3	3
Dressmakers	111	156	168	140	108	63
Dry Goods	19	24	17	21	34	25
Fancy Goods	27	21	12	6	3	2
Millinery	16	25	30	28	25	13
Tailors and Merchant Tailors	13	33	32	43	50	44
Variety Stores	14	9	20	35	55	56
Non-needlework Related Retail Industry						
Apothecaries and Druggists	18	26	42	41	27	39
Bakers	11	18	33	35	35	47
Booksellers and Stationers	11	11	13	8	10	5

materials. Between 1890 and 1910, 57.7% of Massachusetts textile mills operatives were of foreign extraction,[25] and in the textile town of Lawrence, the percent of foreign-born and those born of immigrant parents rose from 45.95% to 48.1%.[26]

The retail businesses these needlewomen patronized were essentially of two types: an individual or family enterprise in the labor aspect of needlework, such as millinery or dressmaking, with sales of needlework materials as an adjunct or even a principal support of the business, and retailers who sold a variety of goods in addition to needlework and sewing supplies, as did dry goods sellers and variety stores. A very small number of businesses actually traded entirely in needlework and most of these were designers, stampers and linen markers.

The headings under which these commercial establishments were listed in the Sampson and Murdock directories were uniform for all four cities. It is possible to derive from the tables a general picture of the rise and fall of local market conditions for needlework retailing during the last two decades of the nineteenth century, and the first three decades of the twentieth, in comparison to three kinds of retail industry unrelated to needlework. Apothecaries, bakers and booksellers were chosen as small wares sellers whose goods would have been important but not essential to the lives of middle and working class people. The figures for these three kinds of enterprise, which would have been patronized by both men and women in contrast to needlework businesses, do not appear to fluctuate with the textile economy as abruptly as do the needlework-related retail industries. Wholesalers to the local trade, of whom there are relatively few compared to retail businesses, have been added to the count for all classifications of enterprise. All these industries are of the type patronized primarily on a local basis rather than requiring mail-order or out-of-town shopping. Except for tailors, merchant tailors and most dry goods stores, women were the owners of a large proportion of the needlework-related enterprises.

The statistics might suggest that as the family and/or personal income levels of middle and working class needlewomen began to drop as a result of unempolyment during the textile depression and later adverse economic conditions, their lack of disposable income seems to be reflected in the declining numbers of needlework businesses their "pin money" was able to support. It seems likely that the economic effect of

working and middle class women on the needlework economic community as a whole was a contributing factor to the declining fortunes of the notions industry between 1920 and 1930, which all but ended the thread companies' subsidy of quality design. Another factor, of course, would be the decline of the textile industry as a whole, which resulted in less advertising and promotion of sewing and needlework.

The growth and dissemination of needlework and its aesthetic and commercial flowering between 1880 and 1930 gave many women opportunities for creativity in art forms historically their own. The current resurgence of needlework activity closely parallels the earlier phenomenon in both the commercial and the artistic spheres, once again providing business and professional options for needlework designers, magazine editors and writers, and small business owners. The needlework press has more than tripled in volume since 1960 and continues to grow, as do the variety and quantity of threads, yarns, kits and other materials manufactured for needlework. One might conclude that the needle arts, far from withering in periods when women are advancing in status, seem to profit aesthetically and financially from improvements in the condition of its principal consumers and practitioners. The positive effects of women's emancipation on the American needle arts was suggested by Charlotte Gilman's treatise on the home in 1903, in which she observed that domestic art could not reach its full potential until women participated actively in the world, or until the world acknowledged its share in the nurturing and supportive environment of the home.[27]

Notes

1. A longer version of this paper is being published in two parts: Part I appears in Sew Business, Sylvan Publishing Company, Vol. 117, No. 1, pp. 105-11, January, 1978. Part II will appear in the February, 1978 issue. A complete list of works consulted will be found there.

2. Therèse de Dillmont, Encyclopedia of Needlework (Mulhouse, France: D.M.C. Editions Th. de Dillmont, n.d.).

3. Martha Genung Stearns, Homespun and Blue (New York: Bonanza Books, 1963), p. 66.

4. Christine Perry, "Enter Battenberg Laces," Needlecraft, July 1932, p. 5.

5. Singer Sewing Machine Company, Singer Instructions for Art Embroidery and Lace Work, 6th ed. (N.p.: Singer Sewing Machine, 1931).

6. Carrie Hall and Rose Kretsinger, The Romance of the Patchwork Quilt in America (New York: Bonanza, 1935), p. 29.

7. Ruth Finley, Old Patchwork Quilts and the Women Who Made Them (Newton Centre, Mass.: Charles T. Branford, 1929), p. 196.

8. Belding Brothers and Company, Souvenir (Belding, Michigan: Belding Bros., [1900]). Cf. George A. Clark and Brother, A Thread Mill (New York: George A. Clark, [1882]).

9. Margaret Barton Manning, "What Shall She Do?" Needlecraft, October 1920, p. 3.

10. J.E.D., "A Bit of Experience," Needlecraft, July 1919, p. 3.

11. Margaret Barton Manning, "Once More the Man's Number," Needlecraft, November 1916, p. 9.

12. Allie Lowe Miles, Extra Money (New York: Woman's Home Companion, 1927).

13. Charles B. Marble, "Bringing the World Together," Modern Priscilla, February 1923, p. 1.

14. Florence Yoder Wilson, "Our New Citizens," Needlecraft, July 1932, p. 12.

15. Mary E. Fitch, Filet Crochet with Instructions, Series No. 2 (Brookline, Mass.; Mary E. Fitch, 1915) is an advertising leaflet for Woolworth's cotton thread; Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co., Needle Art and Health Book (Lynn, Mass.: Pinkham, n.d.), for patent medicine.

16. Belding Brothers and Co., The Self-Instructor in Silk Knitting, Crocheting and Embroidery (New York: Belding Bros., 1883), p. 1.

17. Nonotuck Silk Co., How to Use Florence Knitting Silk, no. 4 (Boston: Wright and Potter, 1882), p. 3.

18. Dockham's American Trade Reports, Textile Manufacture and Dry Goods Trade and Directories (Boston: Dockham, 1891-92), pp. 334-336.

19. Brainerd and Armstrong Co., Household Sample Card for Art Needleworkers (New London, Conn.: Brainerd and Armstrong, [1901]).

20. George A. Clark and Brother, op. cit., p. 1.

21. Barbour Flax Spinning Co., Imperial Macrame Lace Book, 7th ed. (New York: Barbour, 1881).

22. Claudia Kidwell and Margaret C. Christman, Suiting Everyone (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1974), p. 165.

23. Robert Dunn and Jack Hardy, Labor and Textiles (New York: International Publishers, 1931), Chapter VII and Constance Williams, Re-employment Programs in Four Massachusetts Textile Cities, 1928-40, Diss. University of Chicago 1941, (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1945) Chapter 1.

24. Hannah Josephson, The Golden Threads (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pierce, 1949), pp. 92-94, and Women of Lowell (New York: Arno Press, 1974), pp. 89, 139, 147 and 174.

25. Joan Younger Dickinson, The Role of the Immigrant Women in the U.S. Labor Force 1890-1910, Diss. University of Pennsylvania, 1975 (Ann Arbor: Xerox, 1975) p. 173.

26. Donald B. Cole, Immigrant City: Lawrence Mass., 1845-1921 (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1963).

27. Charlotte Perkins Gilman, The Home: Its Work and Influence (1903; rpt. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1972), pp. 143-159.

Family and Class in Contemporary America: Notes Toward an Understanding of Ideology[1]

Rayna Rapp

This paper is grounded in two contexts, one political and one academic. The political context is that of the Women's Movement, in which a debate seems always to be raging concerning the future of the family. Many of us have been to an archetypical meeting in which someone stands up and asserts that the nuclear family ought to be abolished because it is degrading and constraining to women. Usually, someone else (often representing a Third World position) follows on her heels, pointing out that the attack on the family represents a White, middle-class position, and that other women need their families for support and survival. Evidently both speakers are, in some senses, right. And just as evidently they aren't talking about the same families. We need to explore those differing notions of family if we are to heal an important split in our movement. To do so, we must take seriously the things women say about their experiences in their families, especially as they vary by class.

The second context out of which this paper grows is the academic study of the contemporary American family. Over the last few years, in reading eclectically in sociology, demography, urban planning and policy literature, I've been trying to sort out what is known (or not known) about women's experiences in their families. Here, too, a debate is raging over the future of the family. On the one hand, there is a tremendous alarmism which presages the end of the family--recent books have included titles such as The Fractured Family; journals on family co-ordination and counseling, and courses at every level from high school through graduate studies speak of the family in crisis. On the other hand, Here to Stay (to name but one title) and a spate of studies re-analyzing the divorce rates reassure us that the American family is simply changing, but not disappearing. This debate seems to mystify the very subject it claims to clarify.[2] This is not surprising, as the family is a topic which is ideologically charged. In order to get some understanding of the importance of ideology in analyses of the family, there are two fields to which we ought to turn for perspective. One is the recent work that has been done on the history of the family.[3] A great many innovative studies reveal very similar issues in historical perspective; for as long as modern records have been kept concerning families, it seems that people

have been speculating on what would become of the institution. The last decade of social history should caution us to moderate our alarmism. At the very least, we have learned that all societies contain a multiplicity of family forms whose structural arrangements respond to complex conditions. The future of the family is very often defined as problematic during times of rapid social change.

The second field which adds perspective to the issue is anthropology, which studies the family and kinship systems both at home and abroad. Anthropology reminds us that we are all participant observers when we study the American family. We all have cognized, native models to contend with--that is, we all think we know how our families "work." I'd contend that our understandings often get in the way, and most often express the ideology and norms of our culture, rather than an analysis. This work of warning leads me to examine not only what differing groups of people say about their families, but what they actually do in their families. It also leads me to examine the ways in which I think the concept of family itself is ideological in social science.

As I noted earlier, the archetypical political debaters arguing over the meaning of the family aren't talking about the same families. Neither are the social scientists. What I want to assert (and to begin to substantiate by examining some case studies) is this: we need to make a distinction between families and households, and to examine their relation to one another. The entities in which people actually live are not families, but households (as any census-taker, demographer, or fieldworking anthropologist will tell you). Households are the empirically measurable units within which people pool resources and perform certain tasks. Goody analyzes them as units of production, reproduction and consumption (1972). They are residential units within which personnel and resources get distributed and connected. Households may vary in their membership composition, and also in their relation to resource allocation, especially in a system such as our own. That is, they vary systematically in their ability to hook into, accumulate, and transmit wealth, wages, or welfare. This seems a simple unit to define.

"Family", on the other hand, is a bit more slippery. In English we tend to gloss "family" to mean household. But analytically, the concept means something else. For all classes of Americans, the word is polysemic: it has at least two levels of meaning (Goody, 1972;

Schneider & Smith, 1973). One is normative: husbands, wives and children as a set of relatives who should live together (that is, the nuclear family). The other meaning includes a more extended network of kin relations which people may activate selectively. That is, the American family includes the narrower and broader webs of kin ties that are "the nuclear family" and all relations by blood and marriage. The concept of family is presumed in America to carry a heavy load of affect. We say, "blood is thicker than water," "till death do us part," "you can choose your friends, but not your relatives," etc. What I will argue in this paper is that the concept of family also carries a heavy load of ideology. The reason for this is that the family is the normative, correct way in which people get recruited into households. It is through families that people enter into productive, reproductive, and consumption relations. The two genders enter them differently. Families organize households, and it is within families that people experience the absence or presence, the sharing or withholding of basic poolable resources. "Family" (as a normative concept in our culture) reflects those material relations; it also distorts them. As such, the concept of family is a socially necessary illusion which simultaneously expresses and masks recruitment to relations of production, reproduction and consumption--relations that condition different kinds of household resource bases in different class sectors. Our notions of family absorb the conflicts, contradictions and tensions which are actually generated by those material, class-structured relations that households hold to resources in advanced capitalism. In sum, "family" as we understand (and misunderstand) the term is conditioned by the exigencies of household formation, and serves as a shock-absorber to keep households functioning. People are recruited and kept in households by families in all classes, yet the families they have (or don't have) are not the same.

Having asserted that households and families vary by class, we now need to consider that third concept, class. If ever a concept carried a heavy weight of ideology, it is the concept of class in American social science. We've got a huge and muddled literature which attempts to reconcile objective and subjective measures, to sort people into lowers, uppers and middles, to argue about the relation of consciousness to material reality.[4] At the risk of glossing such an important concept, let me say simply that "social class" is a short-hand for a process, and not a thing. That process is the one by

which different social relations to the means and meanings of production are inherited and reproduced under capitalism. As the concept is developed through Marx, the process of capital accumulation generates and constantly deepens relations between two categories of people: those who are both available and forced to work for wages because they own no means of production, and those who control those means of production. The concept of class expresses a historical process of expanding capital. In the process, categories of people get swept up at different times and places, and deposited into different relations to the means of production, and to one another. People then get labelled blue collar or white collar; they may experience their social existence as mediated by ethnicity or the overwhelming legacy of slavery and racism. Yet all of these categories must be viewed in the light of the historic process of capitalist accumulation in the United States. To a large extent, what are actually being accumulated are changing categories of proletarians. Class formation and composition is always in flux; what gets accumulated in it are relationships. Under advanced capitalism, there are shifting frontiers which separate poverty, stable wage-earning, affluent salaries, and inherited wealth. The frontiers may be crossed by individuals, and in either direction. That is, both upward and downward mobility are real processes. The point is, "class" isn't a static place which individuals inhabit. It is a process determined by the relationships set up in capital accumulation. As such, the meaning of class changes historically.

In what follows, I will explore how the distinction between family and household varies for differing class sectors in contemporary America. First, I'll draw a composite picture of the households formed around material relations by class, and the families which organize those households. I will then show that those families mean different things by class, and by genders as well, because classes and genders stand in differing material relations to one another. Finally, I will examine the meaning of these differences in ideological terms.

I begin with a review and interpretation of the working class family, based on studies which span the postwar decades from the late 1940's to the present. They are regionally diverse, and report on both cities and suburbs. Using the data provided by researchers such as Berger, Gans, Komarovsky, Howell, Rubin, and others, this composite portrait emerges.[5] The most salient characteristic of household organization in the working class is dependency on hourly wages. Stable working

class households participate in relations of production, reproduction and consumption by sending out their labor-power in exchange for wages. "Sending out" is important: there is a radical split between household and work-place, yet the resources upon which the household depends come from participation in production outside of itself. How much labor-power a working class household needs to send out is determined by many things; the cost of reproducing (or maintaining) the household, the work careers and earning trajectories of individual members as they are brought back to pool, and the domestic cycle (that is, the relations between the genders and the generations, which specify when and if wives and adolescent children are available to work outside the home). Braverman (1974) estimates that the average working class household now sends out 1.7 full-time equivalent workers. That figure tells us that a high percentage of married women and teenaged children are contributing their wages to the household. In many ways, the work patterns for 19th Century European capitalism described by Scott and Tilly (1975) still leave their mark on the contemporary American working class household: it is not only male heads of households upon whom survival depends.

What the working class sends out in exchange for basic resources is labor power. Labor power is the only commodity without which there can be no capitalism. It is also the only commodity for which the working class potentially controls its own means of production (cf. Gerstein, 1973). Control over the production of labor-power has affected women's experiences historically, as it still does today (cf. Gordon 1976). In the early stages of industrialization, it appears that working class households literally produced a lot of babies (future labor-power) as their strategy for dealing with a market economy (e.g., Tilly, 1977).[6] Now, workers produce fewer children, but the work of servicing them (social reproduction) is still a major process that goes on in the household. Households are the basic units in which labor-power is reproduced and maintained. This takes place in a location radically removed from the work-place. Such relations therefore appear as autonomous from capital, but of course they are not: without wages, households are hard to form and keep functioning; without the production of a disciplined labor force, the economy can't produce and profit.

The work that gets done in households (primarily by women) is not simply about babies. Housework itself has recently been rediscovered as work, and its contribution to arenas beyond the household is clear.[7] At the very

least, housework cuts the reproduction costs of wage-workers. Imagine if all those meals had to be bought at restaurants, those clothes cleaned at laundry rates, those beds made by hotel employees! Housework is also what women do in exchange for access to resources which are bought by their husbands' wages. As such, it is a coin of exchange between men and women. As housework is wageless, it keeps its workers dependent on others for access to commodities bought with wages. It makes them extremely vulnerable to the work conditions of their men. When women do work outside the home (as increasingly they do), their primary definition as house-worker contributes to the problems they encounter in entering the paid labor force. They are available for part-time (or full-time) work in the lowest paid sectors of the labor market, in jobs which leave them less economically secure than men. Participation in the "sexregated" labor market then reinforces dependency upon the earnings of other household members, and the continued importance of women's domestic labor.[8]

Of course, these rather abstract notions of "household participation" in the labor market or in housework are experienced concretely by family members. Working class families are normatively nuclear. They are formed via marriage, which links men and women "for love" and not "for money" (cf. Schneider and Smith, 1973, ch. 5). This relation is of course both real, and a socially necessary illusion. As such, it is central to the ideology of the family. The cultural distinction between love and money corresponds to the distinction between private family life in the home, and work life outside the home. The two are experienced as opposite; in fact they are interpenetrating. The seeming autonomy to exchange love at home expresses something ideological about the relation between home and work: one must work for the sake of the family, and having a family is the "pay-off" for leading a productive life. Founding a family is what people do for personal gratification, for love and for autonomy. The working class family literature is full of life-histories in which young women saw "love" as the way to get out of their own, often difficult families. Rubin's interviews, for example, are full of teenaged girls who said, "when I grow up, I'll marry for love, and it will be better than my parents' marriage." You may marry for love, but what you mainly get is babies. Forty to sixty percent of teenaged pregnancies are conceived premaritally, and approximately 50% of working

class women marry in their teen years (Rubin, 1976, ch. 4). It's a common experience to go from being someone's child to having someone's child in under a year. This is not exactly a situation which leads to autonomy.

For men, the situation is complementary. As one of the young working class men in Rubin's study puts it:

> I had to work from the time I was thirteen and turn over most of my pay to my mother to help pay the bills. By the time I was nineteen, I had been working for all those years and I didn't have anything--not a thing. I used to think a lot about how when I got married, I would finally get to keep my money for myself. I guess that sounds a little crazy when I think about it now because I have to support the wife and kids. I don't know what I was thinking about, but I never thought about that then.
>
> (1976:56-57)

What you get from the romance of love and marriage is in fact not simply a family, but a household, and that's quite another matter. Romance is of course deeply implicated in gender identity and ideology; the process of heterosexual romance masks and reflects material realities. But these realities differ for young men and young women. We are all aware of the cultural distinction made between the sexual identity of a good girl and a bad girl: a good girl is the one who accumulates her sexual resources for later investment. For young men, the identity process includes the cultural role of wild boy--one who "sows some wild oats," hangs out on street corners, perhaps gets in trouble with the police, and drinks (cf. Rubin, 1976, Shostak, 1969, Howell, 1973). Ideally, the good girl domesticates the wild boy; she gives him love, and he settles down and goes out to work. Autonomy means escaping your childhood family to become an adult with your own nuclear family. But of course, autonomy is illusive. The family is classically seen as an escape from production, but in fact it is what sends people into relations of production, for they need to work to support their families. The meaning of production is simultaneously denied and experienced through family relations; working class wives say of a good husband that he works steadily, provides for the kids, and never harms anyone in the family. The complementary statement is uttered by working class husbands, who define a good wife as one who

keeps the kids under control when he comes home from a hard day's work, and who runs the household well (cf. Rubin, 1976, Shostak, 1969, Sennett and Cobb, 1972, Terkel, 1972). To exchange love is also to underwrite both the necessity and the ability to keep on working. This is the heritage that working class families pass on in lieu of property to their children.

The family expresses ideology in another sense as well: the distinction between norms and realities. The norms concerning families are that people should be loving and sharing within them, and that they should be protective. The reality is too often otherwise, as the recent, rising consciousness of domestic violence indicates. Even without domestic violence, there are more mundane stresses to which families are often subjected. Rubin (1976) found in her study that 40% of the adults she interviewed had an alcoholic parent. Fifty percent had experienced parental desertion or divorce in their childhood. National statistics confirm these figures (1976:221-222). About half the adults in her study had seriously destabilizing experiences within their families. There is a strong correlation between class position (and even job categories within it) and these sorts of experiences. The tension generated by relations to resource base can often tear households apart. Under these conditions, to label the working class personality "authoritarian" seems a cruel hoax. When it's working, it expresses work discipline. There exists tremendous variation, of course, in personality styles among this (as among any other) group of people. Shostak (1969) calls them accommodators versus rebels versus achievers, Gans (1962) labels them routine-seekers and action-seekers, Howell speaks of families with settled versus hard life-styles. These distinctions will be discussed below.

Ideology is expressed in gender role in families in another sense as well. Throughout the urban kinship literature, across classes and ethnic groups, the work of reproducing families is in part undertaken by larger kinship groups (the family in the broader sense of relatives). Family networks in this larger sense are women-centered and tend to be serviced by women. There exists a large literature on women-centered kinship networks in which it is usually assumed that women minister to kinship because they minister to families in general. Sylvia Yanagisako (1977) suggests that there is also a symbolic level to the kinship work which women do: ideologically, women are assigned to "inside, home, private" domains, while men are seen to

represent the outside world. Nuclear families are under cultural constraints to appear as autonomous and private. Yet they are never as private in reality as such values might indicate. The ideal autonomy of an independent nuclear family is constantly being contradicted by the realities of social need, in which resources must be pooled, borrowed, shared. It is women who bridge the gap between what a household's resources really are, and what a family's position is supposed to be. Women exchange babysitting, share meals, loan small amounts of money. When a married child is out of work, his (or her) nuclear family may turn to the mother, and often moves in for a while. The working class family literature is filled with examples of such pooling.[9] To the extent that women "represent" the family, they facilitate the pooling which is needed at various points in the domestic cycle. Men maintain, at least symbolically, the autonomy of their families. Pooling is a norm of family behavior, but it's a hard norm to live with either to meet or ignore. To comply with the demands of the extended family completely is to lose control over material and emotional resources; to refuse is very dangerous, as people know they will need one another. The tight-rope act which ensues is well-characterized in the classic mother-in-law story, which usually concerns a young wife and her husband's mother. The two women must figure out a way to share the small services, the material benefits, and the emotional satisfactions which one man brings to them both in their separate roles of mother and wife. The autonomy of the younger woman is often compromised by the elder's needs; the authority of the mother is sometimes undermined by the demands of the wife. Women must constantly test, strain, and repair the fibers of their kinship networks.

Such women-centered networks are implicated in a process which has not yet been discussed. We have spoken of production and reproduction as they affect the working class household and family. We ought briefly to mention consumption as well. As a household function, consumption includes turning an amount of wages into commodities so that labor-power may be reproduced. This is often women's work. And work it really is. Weinbaum and Bridges (1976) tell us that the centralization and rationalization of services and industry under advanced capitalism may be most efficient from the point of view of capital, but it leaves a lot of unrewarding, technical work to be done by women in supermarkets, in paying bills, in dealing with huge bureaucracies. Women experience the pay packet in terms of the use values it will buy. Yet their consumption

work is done in the world of exchange value. They mediate the tension between use and exchange, as exemplified in the classic tales concerning domestic quarrels over money in which the man blames the woman for not making his paycheck stretch far enough. In geographically stable working class neighborhoods, the consumption work is in part done by women united by family ties who exchange services, recipes, sales information, and general life style skills. Kinship networks are part of "community control" for women. As Seifer (1973,1976) notes, working class women become involved in political issues that threaten the stability of their neighborhoods. Perhaps one reason is that their neighborhoods are the locus of kin networks within which both work needs and emotional needs are so often met.

When everyone submits to the conditions described here "for the sake of the family," we see the pattern that Howell (1973) labels settled living. Its opposite, in his words, is hard living, a family life style which includes a lot of domestic instability, alcohol, and rootlessness. The "culture of poverty" is too dichotomous an interpretation for this reality. The value of a label like hard living is that it stresses a continuum made up of many attributes. It is composed of many processes with which the working class has a lot of experience. Given the national statistics on alcoholism, desertion, divorce, premarital pregnancy, etc., everyone's family has included such experiences, either in its own domestic cycle, or in the wider family networks.[10] Everyone had a wild brother, or was a bad girl, or had an uncle who drank too much, or cousins who got divorced. In each of such cases, everyone experienced the pooling of resources (or the lack of pooling) as families attempted to cope with difficult, destabilizing situations. In a sense, the hard livers keep the settled livers more settled: the consequences of leaving the normative path are well-known and are not appealing. This, too, is part of the working class heritage. In studies by Seifer, Howell and Rubin, young women express their hopes of leaving a difficult family situation by finding the right man to marry. They therefore marry young, with little formal education, possibly about to become parents, and the cycle begins again.

Of course, hard living is most consistently associated with poverty in the urban family literature. For essentially political reasons, Black poverty has more frequently been the subject of social science analysis than has White poverty. The pattern I'm describing is found across races. Black Americans have survived under extremely difficult conditions; many of their household

and family patterns have evolved to deal with their specific history, while others are shared with Americans of similar class and regional backgrounds. The problems of household formation under poverty conditions are not unique to any group of people; some of the specific, resilient solutions to those problems may be. Because we know far more about Black families in poverty than we do about Whites, the composite picture of households and families given here is based on studies that are primarily Black.[11] I will begin with the household and move on to family structure. Even when talking about very poor people, analysts such as Liebow, Hannerz, Valtentine and Stack note that there are multiple household types, based on domestic cycles and the relative ability to pull in resources. Hannerz (1963) for example, divides his Black sample into four categories. Mainstreamers live in stable households composed of husband, wife and children. The adults are employed, and either own their own homes or aspire to do so. Their households don't look very different from the rest of the working class. Swingers (Hannerz' second type) are younger, single persons who may be on their way into mainstream life, or they may be tending toward street-families (type three), whose households are headed by women. The fourth category is composed of street men who are peer-oriented, and predominantly hard-core unemployed or underemployed. They are similar to the men of Tally's Corner (Liebow, 1967). While Hannerz and Liebow both give us a wealth of information about what men are doing, they don't analyze their domestic arrangements in detail. It is Carol Stack (1974) who did her field work from the perspective of female-centered households who most clearly analyzes household formation of the very poor. She describes and analyzes domestic networks: extremely flexible and fluctuating groups of people committed to resource pooling, to sharing, to mutual aid, who move in and out from under one another's roofs.

Given the state of the job market, welfare legislation, and segregated slum housing, households are unstable. These are people essentially living below socially necessary reproduction costs. They therefore reproduce themselves by spreading out the aid and the risks involved in daily life. For the disproportionately high numbers who are prevented from obtaining steady employment, being part of what Marx called the floating surplus population is a perilous endeavor. What this means in human terms is not only that the poor pay more (as Caplowitz (1967) tells us), but that the poor share more as well. Stack's monograph

contains richly textured descriptions of the way that food, furniture, clothing, appliances, kids and money make the rounds between individuals and households. She subtitles one chapter, "What Goes Round Comes Round," and describes the velocity with which pooling takes place. People try to give what they can and take what they need. Meeting consumption requirements is hard work under these conditions, and domestic networks get the task done. The pleasures and pressures of such survival networks are predominantly organized around the notion of family.

Meyer Fortes (1958) tells us that "domestic groups are the workshops of social reproduction." The survival of children is in many senses the cutting edge of family functions. Whatever else they do, the families that organize domestic networks are responsible for children. As Ladner (1971) and Stack remind us, poverty, low levels of formal education, and early age for first pregnancy are highly correlated: a lot of young girls have children while they are not fully adults. Under these circumstances, there is a tremendous sharing of the children themselves. On the whole, these are not kids who grow up in "isolated nuclear families." Stack, for example, found that 20% of the A.D.C. children in her study were being raised in households other than that which contained the biological mother. In the vast majority of cases, the household was related through the biological mother's family. Organizing kinship networks so that children are cared for is a primary function of families. Men, too, contribute to child-rearing. Like women, they share out bits and pieces of whatever they have. A man may be simultaneously contributing to sisters, to a mother and aunt, as well as to wives or lovers. He may sleep in one household, but bring groceries, money, and affection to several others (see, especially Stack, 1974, ch. 6 and 7). Both Stack and Ladner analyze the importance of a father's recognition of his children, by which act he links the baby to his own kinship network. It is family in the broader sense of the term that organizes social reproduction.

Family may be a conscious construction of its participants. Liebow, Stack, Ladner and others describe fictive kinship, by which friends are turned into family. Since family is supposed to be more reliable than friendship, "going for brothers," "for sisters," "for cousins" increases the commitment of a relationship, and makes people ideally more responsible for one another. Fictive kinship is a serious relationship. Stack (who is White) describes her own experience with

Ruby, a Black woman with whom she "went for sisters." When Ruby's child was seriously ill, Stack became very involved in the crisis. When the baby was admitted to the hospital, she and Ruby rushed over for visiting hours. They were stopped by a nurse, who insisted that only the immediate family could enter. Ruby responded, "Caroline here is my sister, and nothing's stopping her from visiting this baby," and they entered, unchallenged. Ruby was correct; under the circumstances, White Caroline was her sister (1974:21). Yet as Liebow notes, fictive kinship ups the intensity of relationships to the point where they occasionally explode: the demands of brothers and sisters for constant emotional and material aid may lead to situations that shatter the bonds. Fictive kinship is a prime example of family-as-ideology. In this process, reality is inverted. "Everybody" gets a continuous family, even though the strains and mobility associated with poverty may conspire to keep biological families apart. The idiom of kinship brings people together despite centrifugal circumstances.

It is important not to romanticize this pattern. It has enormous benefits, but its participants also pay high costs. One of the most obvious costs is leveling: resources must be available for all, and none may get ahead. Variations in the chance for survival are smoothed out in domestic networks via sharing. Stack tells the story of a central couple, Calvin and Magnolia, who unexpectedly inherit a sum of money. While the money might have enabled them to insure their own security, it is gone within a few months. It disappears into the network to pay off bills, buy clothing for children, allow people to eat better (1974:105-07). Similar stories are told by Hannerz, Liebow, and Howell. No one gets ahead because individual upward mobility can only be bought at the price of cutting off the very people who have contributed to your survival. Upward mobility becomes a terribly scarring experience under these circumstances. To get out, a person must stop sharing, which is unfamilial, unfriendly, and quite dangerous. It also requires exceptional circumstances. Gans (1962) speaks of the pain which working class children must face if they attempt to use school as a tool for mobility, for they will be cut off from their peer-group. The chance for mobility may occur only once or twice in a life-time, for example at specific moments in a school career, or in marriage. People rarely get the occasion, and when they do, to grab it may simply be too costly. The pressures to stay in a supportive and constraining network, and to level out differences may be immense. They contribute to the instability of

marriage and the normative nuclear family, for the old networks compete with the new unit for precious resources. There is almost nothing to accumulate, and nothing is allowed to be accumulated.

The family as an ideological construction is extremely important to poor people. Many studies show that the poor don't aspire to less "stable families," if by that we mean nuclear families. They are simply much more realistic about their life-chances. Ties to family, including fictive family, are the lifelines that simultaneously bind up and sustain individuals. Perhaps they do not express the radical split between "private, at home" and "public, at work" which families represent for the stable working class. Neither work relations nor household relations are so continuous, nor so distinct. What is continuous is the sharing of reproduction costs throughout a network whose resources are known by all. There can be no privatization when survival may depend on rapid circulation of limited resources. In this process, women don't "represent" kinship to the outside world. They become the nodal points in family nets which span whatever control very poor people have between domestic and resource-getting arrangements. Families are what make the huge gap between norm and reality survivable.

It is particularly ironic that the ideology of family, so important to poor people, is what is used to blame them for their own condition. In a society in which all Americans subscribe to some version of the normative nuclear family, it is cruelty to attack "the Black family" as pathological. To the extent that mainstream culture sees the family as "what you work for" (and what works for you), it blames those structurally prevented from accumulating a stable resource base in family language. The very poor have used their families to cement and patch tenuous relations to survival; out of their belief in "family" they have invented networks capable of making next-to-nothing go a long way.[12] In response, they are told that their notion of family is inadequate. It isn't their notion of family, but the relation between household and productive resources that are inadequate.

If we now return to the political debate which opened this paper, I believe we can see that there are two different concepts of family at work. To achieve a normative family is something many categories of Americans are prevented from doing because of the ways that their households plug into tenuous resource bases. And when normative families are achieved, it is at substantial and differential costs to both men and women.

Having considered the meaning of family and household among class-sectors with regular or unstable relations to wages, I turn to those sectors for whom resource bases are more substantial. Analyzing the family and household life of the middle-class is a tricky business. The term, "middle class" is ambiguous; a majority of Americans identify themselves as part of it whenever they answer questionnaires, and the category obviously carries positive connotations. Historically, we take the notion from a Marxian interpretation of petty bourgeoisie: that category of people which owns small amounts of productive resources, and have control over their working conditions in ways that proletarians do not. The term signifies a stage in proletarianization in which small-scale entrepreneurs, tradesfolk, artisans and professionals essentially stand outside the wage-labor/capital relation. That stage is virtually over: there are increasingly fewer numbers of small-scale proprietors or artisans working on their own account in post-WW II America. We now use the term to refer to a different sector, the corporate managers, upper-echelon bureaucrats, and professionals whose income is affluent. On the whole, this "new middle class" is dependent on wages; as such, it bears the mark of proletarianization. Yet the group lives off a level of social surplus that is quite different from the wage levels of workers. (Braverman, 1974, ch. 18.) Such a category is obviously hard to define; like all class-sectors, it must be historically situated, for the middle-class of early 20th Century America bears little resemblance to that of our own times. The notion of middle class has probably been different for each recent generation of Americans. To understand what middle class means for the different groups that identify themselves as part of it, we would need to know the ethnic and regional variations in class structure within which their families entered America, and were sorted out.

In a sense, the middle class is everywhere and nowhere. It is a highly ideological construction which pervades American culture; it is certainly the perspective from which mainstream social science approaches the experiences of all the other sectors it attempts to analyze. To analyze its household formation and family patterns, we would have to examine not only the data available on all the people who claim to be middle class, but perform an archaeology of the biases inherent in much of social science. This is a task

beyond the scope of the present paper. Instead, I'd like to sketch out a few ideas as notes toward future research.

Households among the middle class are obviously based on a stable resource base which allows for some amount of luxury and discretionary spending. When exceptional economic resources are called for, non-familial institutions usually are available in the form of better medical coverage, expense accounts, pension plans, credit at banks, etc. Such households may follow their economic stability at the cost of geographical instability; male career choices may move households around like pieces on a chess-board. When far from family support networks, such households may get transitional aid from professional moving specialists, or institutions like the Welcome Wagon (cf. Packard, 1977). Middle class households probably are able to rely on commodity-forms rather than on kinship processes to ease both economic and geographic transitions.

The families which organize such households are commonly thought to be characterized by egalitarian marriages (Schneider and Smith, 1973, ch. 4). Rubin (1976) comments that "egalitarian marriage" may be a biased gloss for a communication pattern in which the husband's career is in part reflected in the presentation of his wife. To entertain intelligently, and instill the proper educational and social values in the children, women may need to know more about the male world. They represent the private credentials of family to the public world of their men at work. If this is the case, then "instrumental communication" might be a more appropriate term.

I am not prepared at this point to offer an analysis of middle class kinship patterns, but the following ideas might be fruitful to explore.

1) at this level, kinship probably shifts from the lateral toward the lineal. That is, resources (material and economic) are invested lineally, between parents, children, and grandchildren, and not dispersed into larger networks, as happens with working class and poor families. Such a pattern would of course vary with geographical mobility, and possibly with ethnicity. What I am suggesting is that there is a greater "investment" across generations, and a careful accumulation within them. The kind of pattern I'm identifying can be seen, for example, in the huge sums sunk into children's educations, setting up professional practices, wedding gifts (in which major devolvement of property may occur) etc.

2) Perhaps friendship, rather than kinship, is the nexus within which the middle class invests its psychic and "familial" energies. Friends would be likely to replace kin with geographic and class mobility. Friendship allows for a great deal of affective support and exchange, but usually does not include major resource pooling. It is a relation which is consistent with resource accumulation, rather than dispersal. If the poor convert friendship into kinship to equalize pooling, it seems to me that the middle class does the converse: it turns down the volume on kinship exchanges, and replaces them with friendship, which protects them from pooling and leveling.[13]

There is one last sector of the American class system whose household and family patterns would be interesting to examine, but we have very little empirical information. That is the upper class, sometimes identified as the ruling class, or the very rich. As one sociologist acting with studied naiveté, commented, "we know so little about the very wealthy because they don't answer our questionnaires." Indeed! they fund them, rather than answer them! The few studies we do have (by authors such as Domhoff, Amory, Baltzell, Veblen) are highly suggestive. They are intriguing, although I must part company with those who believe that America is ruled by its "ruling class." Whatever the historic role of ancestral owners of capital, the present structure of power in America is entirely too disembodied and institutionalized to be analyzed so simply. Nonetheless, the upper class does appear to hang together as a cultural phenomenon. They defend their own interests corporately, and have tremendous ideological importance.

We know very little about the household structure of the very rich. They are described as having multiple households which are recomposed seasonally (cf. Hoffman, 1971, Baltzell, 1958) and filled with service workers, rather than exclusively with kin and friends. While muck-raking has revealed a general tendency toward "conspicuous consumption," we have no basic information on the relation of their resource bases to domestic arrangements.

When we turn to the family structure of the very rich, some interesting bits and pieces emerge (which may be out of date by now). Families are described as extremely lineal, and concerned with who they are, rather than what they do. They are quite ancestor-oriented, and conscious of the boundaries which separate the "best" families from all others. Families are

obviously the units within which wealth is accumulated and transmitted. Yet the link between wealth and class is not so simple; some of the "best" families lose fortunes but remain in the upper class. Mobility is also a possibility. According to Baltzell (1958), there are specific moments in American history in which it has been possible for non-members to enter the class via certain educational and work-related contacts. What emerges from this literature is a sketch of a group which is perhaps the only face-to-face subculture that America contains. People have access to one another through their control of neighborhoods, schools, universities, clubs, churches and ritual events. This is a closed and carefully guarded set of institutions.

Women serve as gatekeepers of many of these institutions (Domhoff, 1971). They launch children, serve as board members at the private schools, run the clubs, and facilitate the marriage pools through events like debuts and charity balls. Men also preside over exclusive clubs and schools, but different ones. The upper class appears to live in a world which is very sex segregated. Domhoff mentions several other functions that very rich women fulfill. These include (1) setting social and cultural standards and (2) softening the rough edges of capitalism by doing charity and cultural work. While he trivializes the cultural standards that women set to mean things like dress and high art, he has nevertheless alerted us to something more important. In this class, women once again "represent" the family to the outside world. But here, it is an outside world that is in many senses created by their own class (in the form of high cultural institutions, education, social welfare and charity). Their public presence is an inversion of reality: they appear as wives and mothers, but it is not really their family roles but their class roles which dictate those appearances. To the extent that "everyone else" either has a wife/mother or is a wife/mother, upper class women are available to be perceived as something both true and false. What they can do because of their families (and ultimately, for their families) is utterly, radically different than what other women who "represent" their families can do. Yet what becomes disembodied is their womanness as family members, rather than as class members. As such, they influence our cultural notions of what feminine and familial behavior should be. They may become simultaneous symbols of domesticity and public service to which others may aspire. As such, a very tiny percentage of very wealthy women who live in a sex segregated

world and have no need to work are perceived as benevolent and admirable by a much larger group of women whose relation to sex role segregation and work is not nearly so benign. "Everybody" can desire a family in which sex role segregation is valuable; nobody can have a family in which it is quite as valuable as theirs. In upper class families, at least as they present themselves to "the public," we see a systematic confusion of cultural values with the values of family fortunes. At this level, at least, the ideas of the ruling class may become part of the ruling ideas of society.

In sum, at each level of American society, households vary systematically as to resource base, and their ability to tap wealth, wages and welfare. Households are organized by families (which means your relatives both broad and narrow, imaginary and real). Families both reflect and distort the material relations within which households are embedded. The working class and middle class household may <u>appear</u> isolated from the arenas in which production takes place. But in fact, their families are formed to generate and deepen relations to those work processes that underwrite their illusion of autonomy. Women's and men's experiences with "the family" vary systematically by class because class expresses the material and social relations upon which their household bases rest. We need to take those different experiences quite seriously, to explore the transformatory potential as well as the constraints that differential family patterns provide.

Let us understand that women have structurally taken up the position of representing the contradictions between autonomy and dependence, between love and money, in the relations of families to capitalism. The ideological role that women have played needs to be demystified as we struggle toward a future in which consumption and reproduction will not be determined by capitalist production, in which households won't have access to such uneven resource bases, and in which women will neither symbolically nor in their real relations be forced to bridge the gap between affective norms and contradictory realities under the name of love. To liberate the notion of voluntary relations which the normative family is supposed to represent, we have to stop paying workers off in a coin called love.

Notes

1. Social analysis is always a collective endeavor, even when individually presented. This paper builds quite directly on the published work of many people cited in the text, and the unpublished work and discussion of many others. The University of Michigan's Women Studies Program called this paper into being, gave it a first airing, and contributed a stimulating set of discussions. Subsequent presentation of these ideas at the New School for Social Research, the URPE Spring conference on Public Policy, and the Anthropology Department of the University of Northern Colorado provided invaluable feedback. I especially want to thank Jill Cherneff, Ingelore Fritsch, Susan Harding, Mike Hooper, Janet Siskind, Deborah Jay Stearns, Batwa Weinbaum, and Marilyn Young for their comments. The women of Marxist-Feminist Group II posed the questions which led me to write this paper; they are, as always, the supportive context within which the meaning of work is discussed. Above all, Gayle Rubin deserves my thanks for her general intellectual aid, and the specific editorial work she did in turning my primary process into a set of written ideas.

2. The demographic concerns are clearly outlined in Bane (1976); historical issues of rapid change are briefly reviewed in O'Neill (1977); the political issues and public policy concerns are presented with polemic clair in Novak (1976).

3. Overviews of the history of the family literature may be found in Pleck (1976), Lasch (1975-76) and Tilly and Scott (1978). They all stress the complex relation between political-economic and ideological change which both condition and are conditioned by family patterns.

4. There is a huge literature on this subject. Its mainstream interpretation in relation to family research are reviewed in Otto (1975). Marxist perspectives are presented in Anderson (1974 a & b), Syzmanski (1972) and Braverman (1974).

5. This composite is drawn from the works of Berger (1968), Gans (1962, 1967), Howe (1970), Howell (1973), Komarovsky (1962), Rubin (1976), Ryan (1973), Seifer (1973, 1976), Shostak (1969), Sennett and Cobb (1976), Sexton (1971) and Terkel (1972).

6. Tilly presents case historical materials for one area in France; the generalization is my responsibility. The issue has crucial importance for an analysis of population processes in poor countries today, as is made clear in Birdsall (1976) and Blumberg (1976).

7. The economic value of housework has been the subject of vigorous debate in Marxist literature in recent years. The debate was begun with the publication of Dalla Costa (1972), and continued by Seccombe (1974), Gardiner (1975), Vogel (1973), Gerstein (1973) and others. See also Hartmann (1974) and Vanek (1974) for American case historical materials, and Glazer-Malbin (1976) for a review of the field.

8. For historical, sociological and political-economic analyses of women's economic position in the labor market, see the special issue of SIGNS edited by Reagan & Blaxall (1976). See also the U.S. Bureau of Census (1974) for statistical data on demography and workforce participation rates of women.

9. This literature is reviewed in Yangaisako (1977). Instances are found in the sources listed in note #5. The pattern is given much attention in Wilmott and Young (1957) and Bott (1971), both of which analyze English data.

10. Throughout her work, Rubin (1976) is especially sensitive to this issue, and provides an excellent discussion of individual life-cycle in relation to domestic cycle. She explains why the labeling issue is such a critical one (p. 223, note #5).

11. Howell's study (1973) provides important and sensitive insights into the domestic lives of poor and working White families, collected in the style of Oscar Lewis. Composite Black family studies include Hannerz (1969), Ladner (1971), Liebow (1967), Rainwater (1970), Scanzoni (1971), Stack (1974) and Valentine (1968 & 1972).

12. It is easier to make this point given the consciousness-raising works of Haley (1976) and Gutman (1976) which point in popular and scholarly language to the historical depth and importance of this pattern.

13. I know of no qualitative work describing the uses of friendship versus kinship in the middle class. Ingelore Fritsch is currently conducting research on the networks of families in a suburban middle class East coast community; her results should add to this discussion. Wherever I've given this paper, various people (usually of Southern origin) have pointed out the significance of regional variation in this issue. The point requires an investigation of community institutions like churches and voluntary organizations for further elaboration.

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